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Chronicles
A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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On Pat Buchanan and Trade

Kudos to *Chronicles* for "Sovereignty for Sale? The Free Trade Debate" (July) and high praise to Brother Pat for "Toward One Nation, Indivisible"! One thing, though: the Buchananite fair trade "Long March Back" will only come via the third-party route. The Republicans are but the Fabian wing of the Socialist Party, the Democrats being the Jacobins of the same. The last two GOP Congresses have, after all the dust has settled, brought us more crime, higher taxes, and "Joe Chink" (to use a Korean War GI term for the People's Liberation Army) to California shores. Both President Clinton and Speaker Gingrich extol Red China. Where's the difference?

—*Robert G. Sepic*
Norman, OK

Pat Buchanan's critics rail against tariffs on imports by saying that tariffs are taxes that cause consumers to pay more. Did it ever occur to them that domestic taxes like income taxes, FICA taxes, property taxes, etc., are tariffs on our own goods?

Whereas tariffs on imports constituted as much as 85 percent of federal revenue up to 1913, today they account for less than one percent. The other 99 percent is a tariff on ourselves. Last year federal, state, and local governments imposed $2.6 trillion worth of taxes/tariffs on our economy. Environmental, civil rights, safety, labor, and monetary regulations have raised labor costs alone from 50 cents an hour in 1935 to $19 today and constitute a tariff of more than 35 percent on our own products.

That being the case, government has a moral and constitutional responsibility to protect those who abide by our laws against any competitor who does not. No one would condone exemption from federal tax and regulatory laws for a corporation that closed a factory in one state and moved to another. Yet when corporations move to other countries for the specific purpose of evading our laws, while sharing in our economic jackpot virtually tax free, they are applauded for raising share values. Anyone who did that in an honest poker game, without having anted-up, would lose his arm.

Adam Smith would agree. In *The Wealth of Nations*, he wrote: "It will generally be advantageous to lay some burden on foreign nations for the encouragement of domestic industry when some tax is imposed on the produce of the latter. In this case, it seems reasonable that an EQUAL tax should be imposed upon the like produce of the former."

Every import of a product that can be made in America, and every dollar of our trade deficit, erodes our economy for the simple reason that it is a forfeiture of production, which is the origin of all *new* wealth. Those who speak only of exports but nothing about imports and trade deficits have no more integrity than a corporate CEO who speaks only of sales but nothing about expenses and operating losses.

Claiming that the present "prosperity" is a reflection of free trade is like saying that no one was killed in the Oklahoma City bombing because population is up. Trade policies must be judged on their own merit.

In the last quarter-century, as tariffs have been reduced, our economy has suffered a virtual holocaust. Instead of the largest creditor nation, we are now the world's biggest debtor. We have lost control of our destiny to such a degree that foreigners now hold $1.3 trillion worth of mortgages on our federal treasury (40 percent of our public debt) on which we pay them over $80 billion a year in interest . . . money that could be put to far better use here in America. The irony is, it was all our money in the first place, but we parted with it under a fool's gold fantasy that we could enrich ourselves by purchasing imports instead of the products of our industries, contrary to economic law that tells us production creates wealth, consumption dissipates it.

Pat Buchanan stands as a beacon in a moral wasteland. He is right on abortion, right on homosexuality, right on education, and right on trade policy. The fact that he has been unfairly vilified in all of these areas is *prima facie* evidence of the moral decline of our nation.

—*Gus R. Stelzer*
Mill Creek, WA

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Thank you for running serious reviews of Pat Buchanan's *The Great Betrayal*. Unlike a lot of conservatives, he cares about people harmed by economic dislocations. And no true conservative should have any problem with getting rid of the WTO and NAFTA bureaucracies, which don't enact free trade but impose "managed trade" through thousands of pages of new regulations.

However, Buchanan's ideas boil down to swapping a 15 percent tariff for tax cuts in other areas. But the past 18 years of the failed Reagan and Gingrich "revolutions" have proved that it is easy to raise taxes but almost impossible to cut them. Federal taxes now pilfer 21 percent of GDP, more than at any other time in our history except the last two years of World War II. A combination of Labor Democrats and Buchanan Republicans might impose a 15 percent tariff, raising about $80 to $100 billion a year, but where is the coalition in Congress to cut existing taxes an equivalent amount? The second part of the Buchanan program—ending foreign aid and bailouts and bringing the troops home—might by itself reduce federal spending enough for a $100 billion tax cut without a new tariff.

Foreign competition is not the major cause of our economic dislocations. The reasons for the decline in real income over the past 25 years are record tax increases; a near tripling of regulations in the *Federal Register* from 20,036 pages in 1970 to 54,549 pages in 1997; and *ennui* caused by abortion and other assaults on our moral foundations.

Detroit, an example mentioned by Buchanan, is a microcosm of what happened. I was born there and lived in Wayne, a suburb, from 1955 to 1982, when I left because of 15-percent unemployment in Michigan. Naderite federal micro-management of the auto industry drove up costs and cut jobs. The auto companies managed badly. The UAW made foolish demands, especially during the marathon 1972 GM strike. The city government of Detroit imposed an additional three-percent income tax on top of federal and state taxes. After the 1967 riots, desegregation drove middle-class whites and blacks from Detroit to the suburbs. And because of welfare, the city's residents, most of whom are black, have an illegitimacy rate about 50 percent. The black abortion rate is three times the national average. No wonder the city has lost half of its population since 1960 and looks like Dresden in 1945. None of that can be blamed on Toyota or Mercedes.

Finally, while an overall tax cut would help everyone, a tariff combined with a tax cut would harm export/import areas such as California, where I now live. We just got over a deep recession, with unemployment of 10 percent—worse than what Buchanan saw in New Hampshire in 1991—and we don't need another assault on our export-intensive entertainment, computer, and medical instrument industries. Unlike the free trade Confederacy of 1860, we can't secede, even for just four years.

—John Seiler
Santa Ana, CA

After reading *The Great Betrayal* and the reviews in *Chronicles*, I can only conclude that Pat Buchanan has defeated the libertarians fair and square on the issue of free trade. The whole thing reminds me of pacifism; true, if everyone would put down their weapons, there would be no war, but the one who makes the unilateral initiative is almost surely going to lose. Just as there are quite a lot of charlatans pretending to be men of peace, the same is undoubtedly the case with free trade.

About 30 years ago, I took a course in economics taught by Alan Greenspan. One of the things he accentuated was Ricardo's supposed law of comparative advantage: it is to the advantage of each nation to concentrate upon the one thing it can do better than anyone else—even if in some other fields, the nation is also superior to its competitors. Mr. Greenspan argued that comparative advantage is valid algebraically. Indeed it is, but internal consistency is not always a sufficient proof of truth. I can visualize an Irish landowner in the late 1830's: "We Irish can produce potatoes better than anyone else in the islands or in Western Europe. In conformity with the latest findings of the science of economics, we should therefore devote our entire production to this crop; out of this bounty, we will be able to have all of our needs supplied through foreign trade. In this scientific age, 'maximum efficiency' should be the cry."

—Peter F. Erickson
Portland, OR

For the argument, I enjoyed Justin Raimondo's criticism of Pat Buchanan's organic view of society ("Utopia Incorporated," July). For the record, however, Civil War Reconstruction, Indian Wars in the West, the Spanish-American War, the Philippine rebellion, and other lesser conflicts occurred within "roughly 1865 to 1914," a period Raimondo characterizes as "untroubled by war, untouched by regulators, and unfamiliar with the social pathology characteristic of modern life."

President Benjamin Harrison told Congress in 1892, "I believe the protective system . . . has been a mighty instrument of the development of our national wealth. . . . I have felt a most solicitous interest to preserve to our working people rates of wages that would not only give daily bread, but supply a comfortable margin for those home attractions and family comforts and enjoyments without which life is neither hopeful nor sweet."

The surplus continued to mount at the rate of $63 million a year. In 1885, Woodrow Wilson wrote, "It has come to be infinitely more trouble to spend our enormous national income than to collect it." While, contra Raimondo, the coincidence of general prosperity with tariffs seems proof of the fallacy of the free trade argument, Raimondo's "American Company X" and "Japanese Company Y" seem "mere theory" and "floating abstractions."

Why should we not prefer "sovereignty and independence" and "self-sufficiency"? They sound like fine libertarian principles to me. And why should we not be concerned for anguished American working men and women? They have as much right to a life that is both hopeful and sweet as the international financier and transnational corporation. Should they gradually be reduced to the existence of a Third World worker in income and opportunity? Even Nietzsche believed that it is "not just a courtesy of the heart," but a "duty" to treat those who are weaker than ourselves more tenderly. Where economy and consumption meld with culture and community, you have a nation, healthy and whole.

—Patrick Devlin
Visalia, CA

Mr. Raimondo's selection of the computer industry to illustrate the benefits of free trade was a poor choice. Many of the major manufacturers, such as Compaq, Dell, and Hewlett Packard, make their computers in the United States. Canon, a Japanese company, has quit making computers because it could not

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compete. American companies dominate the marketplace. No protective tariff needed here.

Concerning Raimondo's general opposition to tariffs, however, some sacrifice has to be made to bring back lost industries. What is paying a few more dollars compared to the sacrifice soldiers make for their country? But free-traders are no longer interested in their country; only prices and profits count with them. Language, history, customs, traditions, ancestry, religion—these are of little concern for them. Neither are trade deficits.

Self-sufficiency is not merely an issue of aesthetics (as Raimondo argues) but of security.

—Herbert Mertz
North Palm Beach, FL

On Buchananism

A generation ago, utopianism was mainly a leftist mental habit. In the past decade, the right has adopted the utopian frame of mind, not a surprise for groups out of power for so long.

By utopianism, I mean Patrick Buchanan's lament in *Chronicles* ("Toward One Nation, Indivisible," July), a rather one-sided analysis (among excellent observations), closer to a teacher's dictation to recalcitrant pupils than a viable plan of reform, let alone a major political platform. By claiming to be a realist concerned with the grass roots, Buchanan ignores the following parameters of the situation.

First, America's identity crisis—hence the ambivalence of the slogan "America First"—is as old as the United States itself. It is located in the founding dilemma: Is America a *nation* or a blueprint for an *ideal mankind*? Washington has been following both lines at once, confusing friends, foes, and itself alike. This policy has led to an empire *malgré lui*, an invitation to all to join, and probably to a future implosion. Minority groups are the first to feel that the center is yielding; the sturdy and numerous ones may become secessionist nations in the not-too-distant future.

Second, Buchanan is surprised that in this hesitant empire, like in late Rome, not the "people" but the praetorian guard commands and sets policy on immigration, human rights, foreign affairs, and of course economics. But using the language of economic interest, when he actually bemoans the thinning of national consciousness, leads nowhere, certainly not to the re-cementation of a national consensus. Meanwhile, the "ideal mankind" which is Washington's not-so-hidden agenda, induces planners to construct a globalist strategy—military, economic, and cultural. America, as she now stands, is not likely to backtrack from the global frontier and its dynamics.

Because of its post-Cold War hubris (see the *New York Times* op-ed page for daily arrogant details), the United States will soon face global enmity. An implemented Buchanan policy would exacerbate it. Yet, the "values" that Buchanan cites as blocks of popular resistance are in low supply and even lower consumption: America is in no position to sustain a world-siege, from Mexico to East Asia. Those others do not suffer from an identity crisis. "Keeping capital at home" as a means of punishment is a feeble attempt at isolation when American capitalists and ideological strategists can hardly wait to teach free trade and democracy to Afghan tribesmen and Tutsi militia. They want to invest abroad—*now*.

—Thomas Molnar
Ridgewood, NJ

CULTURAL REVOLUTIONS

"*LA PREFERENCE NATIONALE*" has reentered the French political vocabulary. In June, former Prime Minister Edouard Balladur shocked the French establishment by calling for an open national debate on the tabooed questions of immigration and the French identity. The dialogue would inevitably include Jean-Marie Le Pen and his National Front (FN), which continues to grow in popularity and support.

Describing M. Balladur as "*un honnête homme*" of the old school, Le Pen went on (in his publication *Français d'abord!*) to add that any sane man, endowed with heart and reason, would endorse the positions of the FN: "In fact, National Preference has nothing to do with racism, Nazism, or who-knows what else. . . . The national preference is a natural preference. It is inscribed in the natural logic of the world, which desires that a man protect, above all else, his children, his kith and kin, in a word those who belong to the same community. Ethnology, the study of the behavior of animal species in their natural habitat, is in this regard of the highest interest for political life.

"For us French, our constitution is based on the feeling of belonging to the nation, which is a community of destiny. It is therefore normal that the organization of social life take account of the national preference, when certain problems are posed on the grand scale. Even Prime Minister Michel Rocard recognized that France could no longer accept all the world's misery. One of the essential functions of politics consists in confronting choices. Certain choices have to be made against the heart, without enthusiasm, but they must be made because the greater interest of the country requires them. The reversal of migratory influx is one of them. When a country is no longer able to supply its children with work, when it is no longer capable of assuring them a decent life, . . . then, yes, when one is a politician, one must have the courage to make choices."

On the question of immigration, Le Pen made his own choice years ago, and while it has endeared him to millions of his fellow-citizens, it has cost him the support of all right-thinking people in politics and the press. There are American politicians and journalists, far less forthright than Le Pen, who have paid the same price. If you can believe the Republican press, Mr. Buchanan is the worst thing that ever happened to America. There can be no room for a national debate on immigration, because that question was settled by Emma Lazarus's tinny verses on the Statue of Liberty. Because, for there to be a national debate, there would first have to be a nation, which is exactly what the globalists have to deny.

This past Bastille Day, Jacques Chirac (a figure adored by globalist conserva-

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tives in America) reiterated his opposition to national preference—and to any idea of French nationhood—declaring in a televised speech: "I do not see any motives compatible with our humanist, democratic, and republican principles that would allow us not to give foreigners the same rights that we give to the French." The good news from France is that although President Chirac continues to sell out his country as every sensible person on the left and right knew that he would, a few establishment figures have read the handwriting on the wall and realized that it is not written in French.

Here in America, where we do not have the long tradition of national patriotism that is still felt in some French hearts, there is still no sign that any establishment politician in either party is an "*honnête homme*," much less a patriot capable of making hard choices.

—*Thomas Fleming*

THE FEDS now control my backyard—in direct defiance of the Ninth and Tenth amendments. I have heard and read many stories over the years about imperial intrusions into private affairs, but I recently learned about these firsthand when I tried to refinance my mortgage to take advantage of lower interest rates. I immediately ran up against the benevolent wall of FEMA (the Federal Emergency Management Agency)—you know, those nice folks who take care of you when disaster strikes. (I wonder how folks got along before we had all these nice agencies to take care of us.) There is a tiny creek at the back of my property that has occasionally overflowed slightly into my back lot, which is quite large. The slight flooding has just about been eliminated since the county did some work up the line a few years ago. Flooding has never offered the slightest threat to my house, and all surveys have shown no reasonable possibility of it doing so. Neither I nor my neighbors have ever felt the need for flood insurance.

But it appears that the benevolent boys from FEMA made maps picturing my house potentially under water—a preposterous error. (What does this have to do with emergency management, by the way? And what were they doing in my back yard without permission?) As a result, the mortgage lender is now *required* to *require* me to take out flood insurance—or no loan. This requires a new survey and a "federal elevation certificate." So, profits for the surveyor, the lender, and the insurance company. For me, delay—nearly annihilating the benefits of low interest rates. (I find that several of my neighbors decided that the quest was not worth it.)

Will FEMA ever do anything for me? No. Do I want them ever to do anything for me? No. I will be grateful if heavily armed imperial storm troopers don't descend upon my house, as documented in the August *Chronicles* ("Desert Storm Troopers"). I am reminded of what happened in the aftermath of the major disaster we had here in South Carolina with Hurricane Hugo a few years ago. With great fanfare, Congress passed a $100 million relief bill, pushed by our two powerful senators. (The vote was 100-0 in the Senate, as I recall.) A while later we learned—in the small print—that we got almost none of the "victims' relief." It all went to Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, where nobody had any insurance.

It does no good to talk about "conservatives" and "liberals" in the context of such outrages, much less to complain endlessly about the evils of Clinton. (Does anyone really believe that the government terrorist/bureaucrats would have behaved differently at Waco if it had occurred on George Bush's watch?) The Republican "conservatives" have been promising to reduce government for a generation now. They lie. Two decades ago, I stood not far from candidate Ronald Reagan on the steps of our state capitol and heard him promise to reduce fraud, waste, expenditures, and regulation in every government agency. He lied. But we have a much deeper problem here than mere politicians' lies. The Republican Party, in its very origins and *raison d'être*, was a vehicle for activist government. It was devoted to regulation and subsidy for the benefit of railroads, bankers, industrialists, and for suppression of "Rum, Romanism, and Rebellion" (i.e., the behavior of Southerners and Catholics). The "conservative" Bob Dole was completely in character and tradition when he sponsored a Disabilities Act that regulates every parking lot and building in every town and city in the land (including rural churches). He began his public career, after all, as the New Deal poster boy for "rehabilitation," part of the p.r. campaign to soft-soap the public about the sufferings of those citizens who were mangled in the "Good War."

The problem is more than one of efficient "public policy." It is a problem of national character. We cannot hope for any relief from the imperial state until enough people resume the habits of self-government, if that is possible.

I have just learned from a surveyor, by the way, that FEMA based its maps on an aerial survey, which has a large margin of error. What was FEMA doing *flying* over my back yard?

—*Clyde Wilson*

THE PARENTS OF Amy Biehl, the 26-year-old Fulbright Scholar who was hacked to death by black militants in South Africa in 1993, are perfect examples of liberals as defined by Thomas Fleming: people who would refuse to take their own side in an argument. Ms. Biehl, a Stanford graduate researching women's rights and helping to register voters in South Africa, was murdered while driving some friends to Gugeleto, a black township. A band of black South Africans ripped her from her car and stabbed her repeatedly in the head, chanting "one settler, one bullet." On July 28, the South African Truth and

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Reconciliation Commission released the three men convicted for the murder. According to the judges who granted the men amnesty, "at that moment, to [the killers], Amy Biehl was a representative of the white community."

The release of a child's murderers must be a bitter pill for any parent to swallow. Yet Mr. and Mrs. Biehl have made quite a show of their willingness to accept the Commission's decision. In newspaper interviews and public appearances, the Biehls exhibit a steadfast refusal to be mugged by reality. On the day of the decision, the *Los Angeles Times* reported: "The Biehls say they understand the social forces that drove the young men to kill their daughter . . . they never harbored anger against her killers—only sadness at the apartheid system that drove them to murder." Said Mr. Biehl, "Hate is also extremely selfish. And self-serving." To which Mrs. Biehl added, "and self-defeating." At amnesty hearings in 1997, the Biehls hugged the attackers' family members, and shook hands with their daughter's murderers.

Any normal parent would be tempted to kill his daughter's attackers with his bare hands. Most would merely pick up the pieces of their shattered lives, consoling themselves with the hope that their daughter's tormentors are suffering in jail. The Biehls, who no doubt loved their daughter, have taken a different route to effectuate the "healing process," as it's called these days. They have spoken to the press, and gone on National Public Radio to express their support for the killers' release. With the help of a $500,000 grant from the U.S. Agency for International Development, they now run an anti-violence project in Cape Town.

"We're not angry, just empty," says Mr. Biehl. Sadly, that's so—in more ways than he realizes.

—*Gene Healy*

THE TOBACCO BILL went up in smoke in June, and as I write there's no telling whether it will resolidify, like Aladdin's genie, if Congress rubs the lamp. But before we consign the fight to the ancient history file, it's worth noting a few details.

With the McCain bill died an attempt to kill the tobacco price-support program that has been so important to farmers in states like Kentucky and North Carolina. It was no surprise that the internationally-minded Senator Richard Lugar of Indiana had sponsored language that would have phased out the price-support program in three years, with a buyout. Mr. Lugar hates cigarettes, hates any kind of farm price-support program, and believes that we should give away our tax money only to people who really need it (i.e., the Pakistanis).

It was astonishing, however, that at the 11th hour Lugar was joined as co-sponsor by his fellow Republican, Kentucky Senator Mitch McConnell. McConnell abandoned his previous support for fellow Kentuckian Wendell Ford's LEAF Act, which would have kept the program but offered a 10-year buyout to those farmers wanting it. At a vital point in the debate, McConnell split the Kentucky delegation on this issue for the first time in memory. (Ford learned of McConnell's change of heart only at a joint Lugar/McConnell press conference.)

The tobacco program should be palatable for everyone but the most entrenched big-business apologists or libertarians. In its 68 years, it has used very little federal money—all except some administrative costs are paid for by growers. In Kentucky especially, it benefits mostly small family farmers, bringing them an average of $6,000 in income a year. That may not sound like much, but any rural banker will tell you it's vital money to Kentucky's small towns.

The program regulates how much a farmer can grow, but in return offers a guaranteed market and sets a minimum price per pound—averaging $1.65 to $1.75 last year. This price has remained fairly low for many years, but it's considerably higher than the world market price, given the pennies farmers earn in competing tobacco countries like Brazil.

The price is also high enough to make tobacco the most profitable crop per acre in this state. It has been vital to Kentucky farmers. Without it, or without a reasonable time of transition to find alternate crops, Kentucky will lose its family farms and small towns at an even faster rate than is happening already.

Thanks to the efforts of the Lexington-based Burley Co-op (the state growers association), tobacco farmers have lined up support from unlikely allies. The American Heart Association, the American Cancer Society, even tobacco abolitionist C. Everett Koop are on record as supporting the program. They understand that killing price supports will not stop the production of one cigarette, or keep one smoker from lighting up. It will just give the tobacco companies a windfall in the millions (given cheaper tobacco prices), and put an unguessable number of farmers out of business.

Proven wrong—at least temporarily—by June's vote, McConnell has spent part of his summer living down his prediction that the program was dead. Never lacking in energy, he has not moderated his rhetoric. He held several meetings with tobacco growers around the state in midsummer, emphasizing the fact that while he supported Lugar's act, he voted against the McCain bill.

But certain breaches aren't healing. Called on the carpet (courteously, I was told) at his Shelbyville meeting by John Berry, Jr., who was for a long time president of the Burley Co-op, McConnell lost his temper and threatened to have the Co-op investigated. Perhaps that threat will go up in smoke, too. But farmers ought to know it bodes ill for them that McConnell has no wish to mend fences with Kentucky's growers association.

What McConnell is banking on—besides short memories, since he is not up for re-election till 2002—is farmers' fatigue. With tobacco under assault for the past several years, with costs rising and labor harder and harder to find, with enough questions about the tobacco program to enable even a Kentucky senator to support killing it, farmers are longing for resolution even more than fairness. One neighbor of mine divides his profits in return for borrowing equipment, rather than buy his own, because he doesn't know if the program will continue. That is probably typical. Plenty of others are at stages of their lives where a buyout (eight dollars a pound in both Ford's and Lugar's plans) would be welcome. Better to be bought out than to bottom out.

The problem is, what happens afterward? Older farmers can retire, but younger farmers, even if they use the buyout to pay off the farm mortgage, still have to find another cash crop. And there's the next generation to think of. Brothers Wendell and John Berry, Jr., had reason to argue in a May 31 *Louisville Courier-Journal* piece that without a good alternative crop, a buyout only means we are paying farmers to stop farming.

If you think all the average American needs to be happy is a service economy job, maybe that doesn't sound too bad.

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But for those of us living in the countryside, in a state we love for its patchwork of small family farms, it sounds like not just the end of an era, but the end of the world.

—*Katherine Dalton*

EPICYCLES:

• Phasing Out Guns: In August, President Clinton announced that the federal government would begin to implement "phase two" of the **Brady Bill**, requiring background checks on those attempting to purchase rifles and shotguns as well as on those who wish to buy handguns. While this expansion was not unexpected, another provision of phase two came as a shock not only to gun owners, but to all advocates of private property. Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin, in a Rose Garden ceremony with the ubiquitous Bradys present, announced that gun owners who had pawned a firearm would be required to pass a background check in order to redeem the weapon. That's like requiring a homeowner to undergo a background check before he can pay off his mortgage—and if he doesn't pass, evicting him from his house. Of course, the latter idea is just silly—after all, houses don't kill people; guns do.

• Bennett-Clinton 2000: In a speech in Boston that must have warmed Bill Bennett's heart, President Clinton announced the creation of "**value-based**" **crime prevention** grants. The grants will fund "proactive" programs—often run by churches and other religious organizations—designed to keep children out of gangs and off the street. Drawing on his own well-honed moral sense, Clinton declared, "When young people learn to turn to values, then they turn away from gangs. When they learn the basic rules of right and wrong, then they can reject the rules of the street. If it's true in Boston, if it's true in Washington, if it's true anywhere, it can be true everywhere. And that is what we're here about. If something can happen somewhere, it is our duty to make sure it happens everywhere."

• Cleanliness Is Next to Sickliness: The American obsession with **health** has backfired again. For several years, studies have shown that the overuse of antibiotics has led to the development of antibiotic-resistant bacteria, including several virulent forms of pneumonia and tuberculosis. Now, in the midst of an unprecedented round of E. coli and salmonella outbreaks comes news that the widespread home use of antibacterial soaps—fed by fears of food poisoning—may be creating more dangerous bacteria. Overly fearful of sickness and death, modern man may be tipping the scales of natural selection against himself.

• More Tolerance: "The billboard will be set on fire or de-faced on Saturday, June 27," announced Marlo Obledo of the California Coalition of Hispanic Organizations. The billboard, erected on Interstate 10 near Blythe, California, by the **California Coalition for Immigration Reform** (CCIR)—which includes, among other groups, Black Americans for Family Values, Asian-Americans for Border Control, and Latino-Americans for Immigration Control—read: "Welcome to California. The Illegal Immigration State. Don't Let This Happen to Your State. Call Toll Free - (877) No Illegals." When the original sign was taken down because of the threats and CCIR's billboard company refused to return it, the coalition erected a duplicate sign on July 4 at the federal building in Westwood. Not surprisingly, the messages left on CCIR's answering machine were, let us say, colorful: "You're a bunch of racist pigs!" "You f- - - - - lazy white trash piece of sh- - . . . . You're here in AZTLAN! You European immigrants get the f- - - out!" "Thomas Edison was a Mexican!" "Barbara Coe [CCIR chairperson], remember me when you die!" "I'm a Mexican guy. . . . I live in Huntington Beach and I'm selling dope in your neighborhood. There ain't nothin' you can do about it." CCIR, forget the billboard: Mr. Obledo's fans are making your case for you.

OBITER DICTA: Charles Edward Eaton, who lives in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, has contributed two new poems to this issue. Mr. Eaton is the author of 14 collections of poetry, four volumes of short stories, and a novel. His latest book of poetry, *A Scout in Summer*, is forthcoming from Cornwall Books. He is the recipient of the North Carolina Award for Literature, among other prizes, and was awarded an honorary Doctor of Literature by St. Andrews College in May.

Chronicles Art Director **Anna Mycek-Wodecki** has illustrated this month's issue. An award-winning artist, she has exhibited her work in Warsaw, Paris, New York, and, most recently, Rockford.

Southrons, take note. *Chronicles* is available at the following outlets in **Louisiana**: Lakeside News, 3323 Severn Avenue, Metairie; Baton Rouge City Newsstand, 4592 S. Sherwood Forest, Baton Rouge; and Barnes & Noble Superstore, 5705 Johnston Street, Lafayette. In **Alabama**, *Chronicles* can be found at Anderson News/Huntsville, 9632 Highway 20 West, Madison; and Barnes & Noble Superstore, 201 Summit Boulevard, Birmingham. If your local bookstore or newsstand is not on the list, please ask the manager to carry *Chronicles*. If he has any questions, he may contact *Chronicles*' circulation manager, Cindy Link, at (815) 964-5813.

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Mob Rules

by Thomas Fleming

William Jefferson Clinton may some day be hailed as the second father of his country, or rather as the abusive stepfather. His seemingly deliberate efforts to disgrace his administration and disgust the people have convinced a significant number of clear-headed citizens of the truth of Acton's maxim that absolute power corrupts absolutely. Perhaps as much as a fourth of the population has had enough, not only of this President but also of the system that spawned him. The Lewinsky scandal is this regime's picture of Dorian Gray: the unnatural pursuit of sex, money, and power dissolved from any ties of loyalty and affection and ultimately incapable of producing any issue or results.

Many of us recoil from the ugly image, but to regress from this regime requires us to understand the nature of the beast. Libertarians are fond of invoking Albert Jay Nock's title, *Our Enemy, The State*, as a battle cry against all government and authority, including medieval principalities, commercial republics, and totalitarian despotism. But no one who has been forced to join a college faculty committee or sit through a town meeting can have many illusions about spontaneous order. Any form of government can be misused, but it is not authority or government *per se* that picks our pockets to pay for the bayonets that are stuck in our backs. Most despotisms, in fact, have had little power over everyday life; it is only a particular kind of modern state that has gained the power to rear children and invent money, and it is precisely the modern state which, in its most advanced form, seems to have specialized in the corruption that is objected to in the current administration.

The real objection to Bill Clinton and his friends is not that they are immoral. Let him who is without sin cast the first stone. But it is precisely these dynasts who have mined whole quarryfuls of moral stone to launch at the American people. The leaders of the national government who demand our obedience in paying taxes, complying with laws made by federal judges, avoiding every unclean thought about persons of a different race, religion, or perversity-choice, and observing all the minute regulations invented every day by a host of government employees that is as great in number as the population of our 13 sovereign states in 1787—those same leaders are caught in the act, day after day, soliciting bribes, evading taxes and so-called ethics rules, and violating the most basic moral rules of everyday life: they lie, cheat, and steal with impunity; they seduce the innocent and collude with the guilty.

The justification of the modern political class is usually framed in Machiavellian terms: "The guy may be a thief and an adulterer, but we're not paying him to sing in the choir. So long as he makes the trains run on time and defends the nation, we can overlook his peccadilloes." But the trains—what few there are—do not run on time. So many politicians have been bribed by the airline, trucking, and highway construction industries that our national railroad system is the laughing-stock of the civilized world. Our national defense, on the same hand, is in the hands of a Commander in Chief who sells arms to our enemies. We would all be better off if Mr. Clinton were singing castrato in the Vienna Boy's Choir.

The corruption of the American regime is not an isolated instance, but the significance gets buried under the pile of individual indictments. Citizens of modern states object to much

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of what their governments do—the high taxes and burdensome regulations—or fail to do, when the streets are unswept or the garbage is not picked up, but only anarchists complain when the state fulfills its primary obligation to defend the nation from predators, both foreign and domestic—the general defense and domestic tranquility promised by the American Constitution.

Too often, however, the agencies of government serve the interests of criminals who prey upon the people whose protection justifies the very existence of the state. Even an official textbook version of American history can produce such examples as the close collaboration between the Capone Mob and the Chicago police, Jack Kennedy's involvement with Mafia bosses who helped deliver the vote, the association of Senator Paul Laxalt with certain businessmen in Las Vegas, or the friendship of John Glenn and John McCain with Charles Keating—the bill for Keating's congressional friendships nearly bankrupted the Treasury.

On a higher plane, large investors have brought off leveraged buy-outs of large parts of the American state: the bankers under Hamilton; the railroads under Lincoln and his successors; the Treasury under Grant. One could go, as they say, on and on, listing scandals like Credit Mobilier, Teapot Dome, BCCI, and Whitewater, which have disfigured the administrations of both parties.

The common way of describing these scandals is to say that they are lapses in an otherwise honest system, and that may still be the best answer, that is, an answer that allows us to sleep at night. But in other areas of our experience with government, we grow suspicious of well-worn arguments about "unintended consequences." Is it not ironic, say the pundits, that welfare only degrades the poor it is designed to uplift, that women's liberation forces women to work two jobs and exposes them to unprecedented risks of exploitation and rape, that public education insures the ignorance not only of the lower classes but even of the middle classes? Ironic, yes, if the word is defined (according to our former colleague Christian Kopff) as the relationship of cause and effect. Isn't it ironic, the detective should say of the suicide, that—after he loaded the gun, put it to his head, and pulled the trigger—he blew his brains all over the Turkey carpet?

Perhaps, in our zeal to point the finger at the malefactors of the other party, we are missing something essential. What if politics in the modern state really is, by definition, a criminal profession? The idea sounds insane, if only for its simplicity. The whole duty of government is more than any one theory may describe. To attempt to account for the rise of the state, the purposes it serves, and the distortions it suffers by any single principle is an effort doomed to stupidity. From Hobbes to Wittfogel, philosophers have barked their shins upon historical experience, and universal historians as ignorant as Wells and as learned as Toynbee have succeeded only in trivializing history. Rather than choke, trying to swallow the whole of the state, we might gain some food for thought if we nibble away at one little corner and pose the simple question: What is the modern state if not an instrument to serve the particular interests of those who control it?

By modern state, I mean the European regimes that arose during and after the Renaissance as well as their non-European imitators. Earlier governments (and primitive societies) were, for the most part, on so small a scale or of so personal a nature that they scarcely deserve to be called states. This is obvious in the case of small-scale tribal societies such as the Sudanese Nuer described by E.E. Evans-Pritchard or the Hebrews whose account is given in the Pentateuch. But even classical Athens—a successful and coherent commonwealth—can hardly be said to foreshadow the modern state. Athens was a kin- and neighborhood-based society, funded largely by tribute and import duties and by a quasi-voluntary system of benefactions from the rich, a nation without police or standing army, whose magistrates were mostly chosen by lot, where corruption was almost always the corruption of individuals and not of government *per se*, because there was no government *per se*.

In looking backwards from the end of the second millennium, we have a certain feeling about what a state is. First and foremost, it is the sense of us and them, not merely of us the people and them the rulers, but of us the people and that entity which Hobbes described as a "mortal god." The state is mortal only because it can be overthrown or conquered; in all else it is as far beyond our ken as the will of Zeus. Christians and pagan Greeks might believe that human beings can participate in the divine; Diomedes might wound the war-god with a spear, and Jacob might wrestle with an angel, but most subjects of a modern state know that "you can't fight city hall," and that there is nothing sure except "death and taxes."

This perception of the state's divine status is valid, whether the rulers' power is justified on the basis of divine right, popular will, or the dictatorship of the proletariat. A political revolution is, therefore, a mere change of religions, a substitution of gods. The king is dead, long live the king—or the dynasty or the institutional revolutionary party.

Another characteristic of the modern state is the largely successful attempt to exercise the monopoly on violence which, according to Treitschke, was one of the state's essential attributes. In many ancient and medieval societies, the responsible classes virtually defined themselves as those who owned arms and knew how to use them, and in the past few years Victor Davis Hanson has made a good case for classical Greece as a civilization of armed farmers. But, to take only the example of a state formed as the result of conquest (namely, England), the Norman kings worked hard to eliminate all the Anglo-Saxon customs that gave the people a dangerous feeling of independence: blood feuds, dueling, the right of barons to try and execute criminals. Although the English state was not perfected, perhaps, until Walpole's time, the Tudors were able, by the 16th century, to extort taxes, impose justice, and levy troops even in the teeth of opposition from the hereditary nobility.

There is no need to review the textbook examples of state-building from Louis XIV to Bismarck and Lincoln, except to point out that progress was occasionally interrupted. Early in the reign of Louis XIV, the provincial nobility of France reasserted themselves and rebelled against the centralization of power being plotted by the French monarchy. The Polish nobility resisted every invasion of their hereditary right to chaos, and in England's American colonies, the frontier experience taught the Virginians and New Englanders that they could do very well with governments that were small, cheap, and locally controlled.

There were many reasons for the American Revolution, but the chief of them was the colonists' experience of living far from the center of power and having to rely on their own efforts to raise a barn, fight the Indians, and hang a horse-thief. In that sense, our ancestors were rebelling not so much against the abuses of a particular king and parliament as against the in-

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creased centralization of power that had taken place during the century and a half between the settlement of Jamestown and the systematic corruption perfected by Robert Walpole and passed on to the third German George. Hardly was the ink dry at Yorktown, however, than Anglophile schemers like Alexander Hamilton began plotting measures by which the infant republics could be sold off, piecemeal, to the bankers, and from Hamilton to Clay to Lincoln, the national government made steady progress toward the English model of corruption.

It is often said that the first experiments in modern state-building were made in Italy, during the Renaissance, and it is certainly true that Machiavelli is the first Western political theorist to work out a system based not on the principle of justice but on the nature of power. Machiavelli's discovery has as much to do with the political revolution that had taken place as it does with his own brilliance. Like Aristotle, he was an observer first and a theorist only second.

The evolution of Italian city-states, even in Tuscany, is too complex and varied to be reduced to a simple formula. Each city had its peculiarities—class conflicts in Florence, the freedom at sea enjoyed by the maritime republics, the relative strength or weakness of the opposite poles of church and empire; however, a few common features can be traced, such as the decline of the traditional authority of bishops and imperial counts, the cities' gradual conquest of the countryside once dominated by feudal nobles, and the rising power of merchant corporations and craft guilds that created and used the commune not so much as a government but as a super-corporation or holding-company to serve the interests of the commercial oligarchy.

In early days, says Villari in his history of Florence, "the Florentine Commune resembled a confederation of Trade Guilds and Societies of Towers," that is, mutual protection societies established by prominent families. The nobility were put in their place by the 13th century, by which time a union of CEOs met twice a year to choose the electors who picked the magistrates. In other words, the major guilds acted as a de facto parliament. Ferdinand Schevill, in his history of Siena, contrasts the weakness of Sienese craft guilds with the situation in Florence where "the *arti* simply and without ceremony took possession of the government and admitted to citizenship only through the door of their organizations."

In Florence, the bitter conflict between the nobility and the richer merchants—in part an ethnic conflict between German stock and the old Italian—partly accounts for the strengthening of the central government, which becomes the pawn of commercial interests. The first "popular" government (that is, a government that included the more middling sort of merchants) has been criticized for the war it waged against the nobility, but Machiavelli observed that it was "impossible to conceive how much authority and strength Florence acquired in a brief period. It became not only the chief city in all Tuscany but was even reckoned among the top Italian cities." Unfortunately, a system created by class conflict must feed on conflict, and Florence's self-devouring *stasis* was only halted by the *coup d'etat* staged by the Medici mob.

The super-corporation which morphs into the state was only an extension of other commercial and industrial corporations whose interest it served. Like a virus created in the laboratory, the invention of the state becomes self-perpetuating (despite changes in regime) and spreads to other countries, some of which were already evolving in a similar direction or where disordered conditions provided the proper nutriment for growth, as in France where Catherine de Medici, daughter of the Duke of Urbino, arrived in time to improve French cooking and to help the house of Valois in their attempt to build up a centralized monarchy. From the perspective of a Borgia or a Medici, the massacre of the troublesome Huguenots was a natural step.

Power is a zero-sum game, and the state-virus can only feed and expand by absorbing or poisoning rival sources of authority, such as the church, a feudal aristocracy, or local jurisdictions—in America, the states. But if "follow the money" is good advice to a reporter researching a corruption scandal, it applies even better to an investigation of the state. It was, after all, Renaissance merchants whose bills of exchange were the inspiration for paper money, and the Bank of England, the Federal Reserve System, and the World Bank were the vehicles for the powerful commercial interests who controlled, respectively, England, the old United States, and the new world-system that is replacing and absorbing both.

From this perspective, the dispute over trade policy might be seen as a struggle between what is left of the old American oligarchy and an emerging (or rather, emerged) class of world-controllers. There are, to be sure, patriotic businessmen and politicians who are mainly concerned with the sovereignty and well-being of the American people, and there are even a few globaloney idealists who dream of a world without frontiers and the wars they cause. But the real action, we can assume, does not concern the likes of us old-fashioned Americans who have been demonized like the Florentine nobility, stripped of our traditions and rights, and reduced to the level of serfs on our own property.

This is, as I threatened from the beginning, a one-eyed perspective on the crimes of government, but there is enough truth in it to justify a little skepticism, when this or that party or movement promises reform. Exchanging Bugsy Siegel for Meyer Lansky will not get the Mob out of town, any more than our degenerate republic will be reenergized by the importation of new "Mafias"—Asian, Dominican, Russian—which is the most profound effect of permissive immigration.

Individual resistance is a gesture even more futile than a new pledge of allegiance to a rival gang. Most mom-and-pop grocers know what happens if they refuse to pay protection. Only a community that is coherent and unified can oppose the Mob, whether the *capo* is John Gotti or Bill Clinton, and we are a long way, in this country, from the time when such communities existed. That is why the first task is not to get rid of Clinton, defeat Gore, or even lower taxes. Our first task is to begin building the communities of resistance that will some day say "No" when the Mob comes into your neighborhood asking for the votes that keep them in power. ◁

THE POWER ELITE

"I sit by selection
upon the direction
of several companies bubble
As soon as they're floated
I'm freely bank-noted
I'm pretty well paid for my trouble."

—*the Duke of Plaza Toro*

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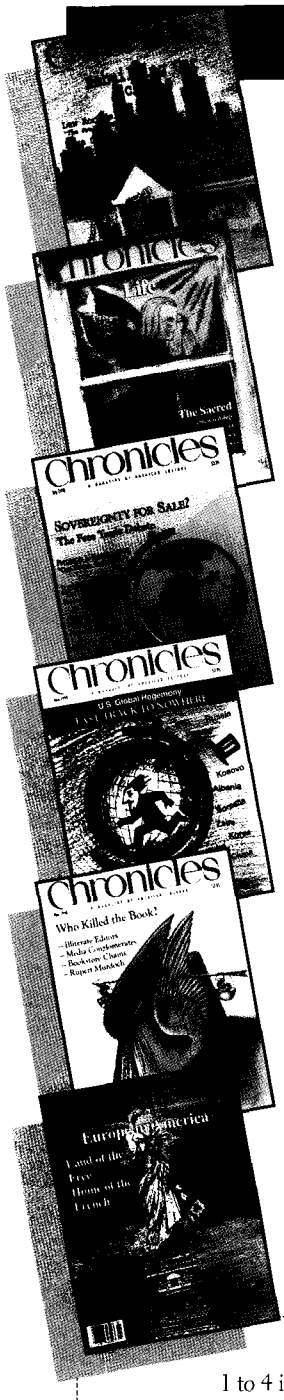
GREAT TOPICS—GREAT ISSUES



REBUILDING OUR SCHOOLS—September 1998—Thomas Fleming argues that it takes a village to educate a child, Joyce B. Haws documents the judicial takeover of public schools, Rep. Greg Kaza examines the Michigan model of school-funding, and Lisa Graham Keegan and Llewellyn H. Rockwell, Jr., square off over school vouchers. Plus Douglas Wilson on why evangelical colleges aren't.

LIFE: THE SACRED AND PROFANE—August 1998—Thomas Fleming on the measure of life's worth, Harold O.J. Brown on the (misplaced) civility of pro-lifers, Bill Murchison on the dark wood of suicide, and Ernest van den Haag on the right to die. Plus Chilton Williamson, Jr., on the suicide of the West and Samuel Francis on multiculturalism and assimilation.

SOVEREIGNTY FOR SALE? THE FREE TRADE DEBATE—July 1998—Thomas Fleming on trade and treason, Patrick J. Buchanan sketches a course of action, John O'Sullivan explains the limits of Buchananism, and Alfred E. Eckes draws some lessons from the Asian meltdown. Plus a debate on Pat Buchanan's *The Great Betrayal*.

U.S. GLOBAL HEGEMONY—June 1998—Doug Bandow on the search for foes in the post-Cold War era, James George Jatras on the demise of national interests, Justin Raimondo on the Clinton administration's attempt to "wag the dog," and Denis Petrov on the *real* powerbrokers in Russia and America. Plus the lessons that Robert Taft could teach us today.

WHO KILLED THE BOOK?—May 1998—Tony Outhwaite exposes the book industry as a hothouse of goofiness, George Garrett and Clay Reynolds lament the decline of commercial publishing, Gregory McNamee highlights the state of the university press, and Gene Edward Veith sees Christian publishers in the thrall of Mammon. Plus three poems by Wendell Berry.

EUROPEAN AMERICA—April 1998—Thomas Fleming on the heart's geography, Jean Raspail on defending civilization, Scott P. Richert on the European roots of American life, and Samuel Francis on the other face of multiculturalism. Plus Roger L. Busbice on the Cajuns and Ben C. Toledano on Creole culture.

FASCISM/ANTI-FASCISM—March 1998—Thomas Fleming on the triumph of national socialism, Paul Gottfried on the politics of labels, Derek Turner on Jean-Marie Le Pen and the National Front, Tomislav Sunic on victimology as scholarship, and Peter Erickson on Ayn Rand and the welfare/warfare state. Plus Llewellyn H. Rockwell, Jr., on the criminal state.

CAN THIS UNION BE SAVED?—February 1998—Thomas Fleming on fighting the federal beast, Donald Livingston on secession and states' rights, William J. Quirk and Robert M. Wilcox on judicial tyranny and constitutional change, and John R. Stoeffler on judicial taxation.

PRIVATE JUSTICE—January 1998—Thomas Fleming on the return of revenge, Michael Hill on justice in the Celtic world, Barry Baldwin on Albanian blood-feuds, Jeremy Black on government's monopoly on violence, and David Kopel on why owning a gun makes everyone safer.

NATION UNDER GOD—December 1997—Thomas Fleming praises intolerance, D. George Leech outlines a Christian foreign policy, William A. Donohue discusses anti-Catholicism (the last respectable bias), Llewellyn H. Rockwell, Jr., shows why the Christian right needs Econ. 101, and Harold O.J. Brown questions the ethics of the clergy.

IDENTITY POLITICS—November 1997—Thomas Fleming on race as the American religion, Samuel Francis on the witch hunts of Morris Dees, Jacob Neusner on secular Judaism, and Joseph Fallon on the politics of Hispanic identity. Plus Justin Raimondo on the black war on Asians in San Francisco, and Mark Tooley on the church burning hoax.

IMPERIAL PRESIDENCY—October 1997—Patrick J. Buchanan on Mr. Lincoln's War, Samuel Francis on the demise of checks and balances, Llewellyn Rockwell, Jr., on executive branch evils, and Donald Livingston and Thomas Naylor on the *real* meaning of the Pledge of Allegiance. Plus Thomas Fleming on how Presidents became our masters.

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ATURE

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The Managerial Mob

by Samuel Francis

Anna Mycek-Wodecki

"Michael, we're bigger than U.S. Steel," boasts gangland mastermind Hyman Roth to his (quite temporary) partner, Michael Corleone, in Francis Ford Coppola's *The Godfather, Part II*. Hyman, however, was not the first to say it, and those familiar with the life history and achievements of the gentleman on whom Roth's character is obviously based, the late Maier Suchowljansky, better known to posterity as Meyer Lansky (or, to his friends and partners, temporary or otherwise, as "The Little Man"), may know that it was Meyer who said it first. So crime experts Ralph Salerno and John S. Tompkins reported in their 1969 book on the Mob, *The Crime Confederation*, and they also reported that "Mr. Lansky was being modest." In 1967, the U.S. Steel Corporation enjoyed assets of some four billion dollars and profits of $172.5 million. Next to the crime confederation, U.S. Steel was a panhandler. The Mob, Salerno and Tompkins wrote, "on the most conservative basis," raked in a gross of no less than $40 billion a year, ten times the value of the steelmakers and without the bothersome overhead of taxes, although, as they allowed, "payoffs and other overhead expenses do cut heavily into the gross." On the whole, they calculated, "The corporate giant of crime annually enjoys a profit greater than General Motors, Standard Oil, Ford, General Electric, and U.S. Steel combined. Its gross business is larger than that of all American automobile companies put together." And, we might add, that was 30 years ago, before free trade and foreign competitors had gutted the steel and other American industries. Today, the Mob remains with us, even though its (somewhat) more law-abiding corporate cousins have long since embarked for Mexico, Brazil, Thailand, and other locations where, as Hyman also remarked, "they *really* understand how to do business."

Samuel Francis is a contributing editor to Chronicles *and author, most recently, of* Revolution from the Middle *(Middle American Press).*

But analogies between the Mob—also known as La Cosa Nostra (in New York), the Outfit (in Chicago), the Syndicate (everywhere), and the Mafia (inaccurately except in Sicily)—and "legitimate" corporations are more than metaphors, whether exaggerated or understated. Organized crime, as novelists from Henry Fielding to Mario Puzo have glimpsed, reflects the political, social, and cultural trends of "legitimate" society. Puzo's epigraph to *The Godfather*, "Behind every great fortune there is a crime" (from Balzac), points directly to the analogies, and it is no coincidence that C. Wright Mills also quoted the same line in his study of corporate power and wealth in American society, *The Power Elite*. As with the myths of primitive cultures, the crime that lurks in the social underbrush tells us something important about the nicer and cleaner world that sits on the front porch, except, as also with myth, the truths it reveals are starker and less encumbered by the moral and rhetorical draperies with which the legitimate society on the front porch decorates itself.

The history of the Mob, the mainly Italian and Sicilian organized crime syndicate that came to typify gangsters in the 1930's, is in fact the history of American corporate business and of American society in the first part of the 20th century. The world-historical process that James Burnham labeled "the managerial revolution" was not confined to American firms and the U.S. government but also took place in the back parlors of wine shops and spaghetti houses in Brooklyn and the guest suites at the Fontainebleau, and the same dynamic of organizational colossalism, social and ethnic fragmentation, and internal bureaucratization that has overtaken American society because of the victory of the managers also snuck up on the godfathers and underbosses. There are, of course, differences. The godfathers and underbosses do not enjoy the luxury, essential to corporate oligarchs, of operating within the law, and they have to enforce their contracts through administration of their own violence. Moreover, the mafiosi, even today, seem to retain more alle-

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giance to ethnic and family bonds than the liberated managers and bureaucrats of transnational firms. Nevertheless, the same historical pattern that brought American society under the control of managerial elites in state and economy can be perceived weaving its way through organized crime, and looking at the managerial revolution as it triumphed among the mobsters helps us see ourselves and what has happened to us.

At the beginning of the 20th century, organized crime was less organized than criminal, based on small gangs that dominated the immigrant neighborhoods of the larger cities, ruled by tightly enforced ethnic, family, and community bonds, and governed by patriarchal (though usually brutal and avaricious) leaders who had deep roots among both their followers and their victims. Its activities were the usual vices that legitimate society forbids—gambling, prostitution, fencing stolen goods, extortion—and its scale was comparable to that of the mom-and-pop businesses and owner-operated firms that typified the American economy of the day. The larger gangs at the turn of the century were not Sicilian but Irish, Jewish, and not a few Anglo-Saxon.

With the advent of Prohibition, this began to change, and by the mid-1920's the Sicilians had formed their own syndicate under a founding father named Giuseppe ("Joe the Boss") Masseria. Something of a megalomaniac, Masseria demanded unconditional submission from his fellow Sicilians and distrusted those who declined to give it. Distrusted in particular were a bunch of Sicilians who hailed from the northern coast of the island, Castellammare del Golfo, and who were raking in big money from the speakeasies. The Castellammarese, as they were known, included such future statesmen as Joe Bonanno and Stefano Magaddino, but their leader was an erudite soul named Salvatore Maranzano. In his youth, Maranzano had studied briefly for the priesthood and, if he learned little of piety, had absorbed enough ancient history to pick as his personal icon Julius Caesar. His apartment was filled with books on Caesar and his political and military tactics.

In 1928, Masseria, increasingly alarmed at the independence of the Castellammarese, decreed an increase in the tribute they were supposed to pay him. At the time, he still held the loyalty of most Sicilians and the services of a good many young men who would soon become famous—Salvatore Lucania, a.k.a. Charlie Lucky, and better known as Lucky Luciano; Vito Genovese; Albert Anastasia; and Bonanno—but the higher tribute and Masseria's increasingly domineering view of himself as "Joe the Boss" grated on them, as did their insubordination on him. In 1930, one of Masseria's gunmen shot down one of Maranzano's less submissive confederates, Gaetano Reina, an act that sent the whole underworld to the mattresses. What ensued is known in Mob circles as the "Castellammarese War," a year-long bloodletting that eventually brought most of the famous names of Mafia lore into the newspapers and dispatched several now obscure names to the funeral parlors. The main figure to emerge into prominence was Luciano, who had been busy constructing his own alliances.

With his pal Genovese, Lucky cut a deal with Maranzano and then made a luncheon appointment with Joe the Boss at Scarpato's Clam House on Coney Island for April 15, 1931. After stuffing himself for some three hours, Joe played cards with Lucky for a while, and then Luciano excused himself to go to the men's room. During his absence, four men armed with pistols charged into Scarpato's and splattered Masseria all over the tablecloth. Luciano was able to tell the police that he had no idea who the killers were or why they would want to murder his beloved patron—he was in the men's room the whole time. "I always take a long leak," he insisted to the cops. In fact, the four killers were Luciano's new allies—Vito Genovese, Albert Anastasia, Joe Adonis, and Bugsy Siegel—and the whole murder had been planned carefully by Lucky and New Ally Number One, the Little Man.

The Castellammarese War did not quite end with the execution of Masseria, though his death did promise a new stability to the mob. But Maranzano soon declared himself *capo di tutti capi*, "boss of all bosses," which was not exactly what Lucky and his friends had had in mind. Maranzano also exploited his learning in Roman history to remodel the whole organization. From now on, the gangs would be structured into units analogous to Roman legions, each led by a *capo*, assisted by a *sotto-capo* or underboss who would command the *caporegimi*, or lieutenants, who led the actual troops. But if Masseria's megalomania had been annoying, Maranzano's soon became insufferable. He concocted the notion that all the little bosses would gather around him, as he sat on a raised platform in their midst, and do him homage. Luciano had moved up in the world with his betrayal of Masseria, but not high enough, and neither he nor his new friends had any intention of letting Maranzano lord himself over them. By September 1931, Lucky and his friends had decided on a course of action.

His friends included the distinctly non-Sicilian group known as the "Bug and Meyer Mob" after their leaders, Benjamin "Bugsy" Siegel and Lansky, along with allies such as Al Capone (like Luciano, a Neapolitan by birth), Murray "the Camel" Humphreys (a Welshman), and Arthur Flegenheimer, popularly known as "Dutch Schultz." The alliance of mainland Italians, Jews, and the odd Welshman was a novelty, since the old "Italian Society" set up by Masseria was a closely knit band largely confined to Sicilians and distrustful of mainlanders and other aliens. But in the minds of Luciano and his confederates, it was merit that counted, not ethnicity, and the course of action they followed against Maranzano and his old Sicilian Mustache Petes created the modern Mob.

The course of action kicked off on September 11, 1931, when a group of "four Jews" (as Joe Valachi would call them some 30 years later) entered Maranzano's business office and shot him to death. But Maranzano's execution was not the end of the action. Over the next two days, some 40 to 50 bosses, underbosses, and lieutenants were cut down all over the United States. Most of these were the Castellammarese with whom Luciano and Lansky had allied against Masseria. Crime writer Peter Maas calls the series of executions "an intricate, painstakingly executed mass extermination." Crime historian Donald Cressey writes that "the losers of the war's last big battle were members of the Sicilian Castellammare group in New York, and Sicilian 'greasers,' 'handlebars,' and 'mustache Petes' all over the country." It was a daring and brutal bid for power, but it was also an act of mini-genocide. In Mob folklore it is known as the "Sicilian Vespers."

After they made the desert, Luciano and Lansky called it peace. Luciano decreed that the Maranzano-Caesarean model of organization would be retained, but there would be no "boss of all bosses" (at least in principle). Instead, there would be a "council of six" composed of the leaders of what soon came to be known as the "Five Families" of New York and one

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representative from New Jersey. The council would be a regional body, intended to keep the peace in the New York-New Jersey area. Nationally, there would be a "Commission" composed of members from the major "families" around the country, and while the Commission would refrain from interference in local families' businesses, no one could be executed without its approval. Moreover, Luciano ordered that no more members would be inducted into the secret society of Sicilians that had dominated the business until that time. Non-Italians and non-Sicilians could not actually be members of the Commission, but Luciano was opposed to continuing the Italian-Sicilian monopoly of power. He explicitly wanted to end the ethnic homogeneity of the organization, in part to allow room for himself and his allies and in part to place a limit on the expansion of the remaining Italian-Sicilian families. By forbidding future inductions and also prohibiting expansion of the families without approval by the Commission, Luciano ensured that no rival gangs could gain enough muscle to challenge his own power.

The organization that Luciano established was at least as much the creation of his ally, Lansky, as it was his own. In *The Last Testament of Lucky Luciano* , a memoir he dictated in his last years to Martin Gosch and Richard Hammer, Luciano acknowledges that it was Lansky who grasped the realities of power for both the emerging Mob as well as for the emerging corporate power structure in the legitimate society. He recounts how Lansky, whom he had known since grade school, once read him a passage from a book entitled *Making Profits* by economist William Taussig of Harvard. "This writer," Lansky explained to the virtually illiterate Luciano, "talks about a thing called the law of supply and demand. What he says applies to us right now. If you have a lot of what people want and can't get, then you can supply the demand and shovel in the dough. In other words, that's what we ought to do with whiskey—get plenty of it, good, uncut stuff right off the boat and then sell it at a high price to a bunch of people who don't have brains enough not to drink it." Luciano was immediately seized with the brilliance of Lansky's elementary economic insight, which came to be called "Lansky's Law" among their associates.

When Luciano went to prison in 1936, it was Lansky who took charge of his personal finances and soon those of other leading gangsters. Lansky also began to move into Cuba and, through his friend Siegel, Los Angeles and Las Vegas, which Siegel virtually created. (Contrary to the movie version in Warren Beatty's *Bugsy*, Lansky, according to Luciano's testament, did not plead with the Commission not to execute Siegel after he committed the costly blunder of opening the first casinos in Las Vegas right after Christmas, but actually took the lead in urging the Commission to authorize his execution.) Yet despite his leading role in the creation of the modern crime corporation, Lansky was virtually unknown to the public until the 1970's (unlike flashy hoods like Luciano and Capone, he was careful to keep his own name out of the tabloids), and though his mastery of financial and managerial details kept the cartel in business long after Luciano, Genovese, Frank Costello, and Albert Anastasia had vanished, he was never a voting member of the Commission. As a Jew, he was ineligible for formal membership, and he reportedly always had to sit outside while the Commission was in formal session.

Yet the distinctive feature of the new crime cartel that Luciano and Lansky created was not only its ethnic diversity but also its emulation, conscious or not, of the emerging corporations in its organizational strategies. "Luciano," writes Gay Talese, "urged that mafiosi no longer seek power through threats and vendettas, but instead adopt the more subtly aggressive tactics of large modern corporations, some of which had been founded by robber barons but were quietly committed to profiteering within a free-enterprise code of rules and restrictions."

What was emerging as the prevalent form of American organized crime, thanks to Luciano and Lansky, was the domination of foxes over lions, of cunning, manipulation, and organization over force and the ethnic-social solidarity on which the earlier gangs were based. It was a transition exactly parallel to the changes taking place in American business and society. As each sector, the criminal and the legal, expanded the scope and sophistication of its operations, the older forms of organization, discipline, and bonding ceased to work. The older forms were the products of traditional societies of comparatively small scale, few members, limited resources, and community-rooted leadership. The gangs of Masseria's day and before could easily extort protection money from local businesses and shopkeepers, beat up or kill traitors, enemies, and rivals, and run small-time gambling and prostitution rackets in their neighborhoods, just as law-abiding businessmen could produce and distribute their own goods and services throughout the local markets of their home bases.

But just as the corporations that were expanding their own businesses throughout the world by manufacturing and distributing goods through advanced technologies were unable to retain earlier owner-operator forms of organization and just as those corporations had undergone processes of internal bureaucratization, so the corporation of organized crime also had to modernize. Luciano and Lansky could not expect to fulfill Lansky's Law with respect to bootleg liquor by relying on the Mustache Petes and their limited skills, methods, and men. They had to mobilize the cash to buy the ingredients of bootleg whiskey and beer abroad (in Cuba or Canada), organize its manufacture outside the United States, pay the overhead costs of production and transportation, distribute it throughout the areas under their control, and at the same time provide their own protection and security. Similarly with the numbers racket, pioneered by Lansky and Schultz in New York and imitated by Al Capone in Chicago. The numbers required a vast street organization that collected the bets, counted the money, paid the winners, and protected the whole apparatus from both the police (through payoffs) and competitors (through muscle). The same was true of drug peddling (initiated by Lansky and Genovese and opposed by Luciano, according to himself). And to run these transnational operations required more specialized skills than a neighborhood *paisan* was likely to possess. In short, the new crime syndicate needed managers.

There are obvious limits to how far the process of managerialization can be applied to criminal enterprises. Criminals, as noted, have to provide their own security and enforcement. They can't take violators of contracts to court; instead they take them on the long ride. The need to supply its own enforcement limits the number of "foxes" who can take part in organized crime. Unless the managerial criminal is as prepared to execute and terrorize traitors, competitors, and reluctant underlings as he is to rely on organizational planning, legal tricks, and financial gimmicks, he won't last. Moreover, the codes of silence and loyalty that successful crime demands means that those drawn into its secret empire and especially those who sur-

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vive and advance within its ranks are likely to be less treacherous and to retain more allegiance to ethnic, community, and social bonds than managers in the law-abiding firms. Nevertheless, the Commission system inaugurated by Luciano and Lansky did reduce internecine wars, vendettas, and unauthorized assassinations among the gangs for a generation. Corporate management and manipulation of markets became the main pillar of organized criminal enterprise in the United States rather than blasting away personal enemies in elevators and phone booths.

The Luciano-Lansky *coup d'etat* of September 11-13, 1931, was an event comparable on a much smaller scale to a bloodless coup mounted two years later by Franklin Roosevelt. Like FDR's, the Luciano-Lansky coup involved the elimination of a competing old elite, an elite that was socially rooted and ethnically homogeneous. It also involved the creation of a new elite as the ruling class of organized crime, new institutions through which the new elite exercised power and controlled the remnants of the old elite, and a new ethic and operational style of managerial manipulation in place of the old ethic of conspiracy and vendetta. The new elite was both ethnically diverse and more managerially skilled than the old one and thus could more effectively control and manage the vastly more complicated and specialized operations of the new cartel. The transition in crime was comparable to the larger transition in the American economy from the locally based, owner-operated, production-oriented businesses and industries of pre-managerial society to the transnational, managerially controlled, and service-oriented businesses of the managerial order. Commenting on the transition in the larger society, the late E. Digby Baltzell wrote in *The Protestant Establishment*:

> the real schizophrenia within the ranks of the business community came, by and large but of course not entirely, from the conflict between this old-stock concentration in the older, more production-oriented seats of economic power and the newer consumer and communications branches of the business community. Thus, not only were those leaders in communications (radio and motion pictures), in retail sales, and especially in the new electronic appliances, more likely to support the New Deal economically because of its efforts to redistribute wealth and place purchasing power in the hands of the masses of consumers; it was the members of the newer ethnic minorities, especially the Jews, who supported the New Deal because they had taken the lead in developing these newer, consumer fields, partly because of the caste monopoly of the older centers of production and commercial banking maintained by established members of the old-stock upper class.

It was no accident that what really excited the Little Man and his crazy sidekick Bugsy Siegel were the communications and consumer-oriented pastures of Los Angeles and Las Vegas or that Bugsy himself was obsessed with Hollywood, nor probably was it an accident that Luciano threw his support behind Roosevelt in the elections of 1932 (he later soured on FDR when the President reneged on his deal with Lucky; the experience went far to disillusion Luciano with politics in general. "What I did was illegal. . . . What he did was legal. But the pattern of it was exactly the same. . . . I never knew that a guy who was gonna be President would stick a knife in your back when you wasn't lookin'. I never knew his word was no better than lots of racket guys," he whined to Gosch and Hammer.) One can easily imagine some old-stock Sicilian Mustache Pete, forced out of his neighborhood brothels and speakeasies by the new Caesar, ranting about Charlie Lucky, a traitor to his own blood and surrounded by Jewish advisors, destroying everything that was decent. It is in fact precisely the complaint that Frank Pentangeli brings against Michael Corleone in *The Godfather, Part II*, and it is precisely the same complaint that the old-stock business leaders brought against Franklin Roosevelt. The analogies between Roosevelt and Luciano are clear enough; whether there are significant differences between the managerial Caesar in the White House and his counterpart who created the thoroughly modern Mob and who died in exile in Italy in 1962 is perhaps best left to those who knew them as well as Charlie Lucky came to know FDR. ·c·

The Albatross

by Charles Edward Eaton

Among all your gains—women, the sea, fruit, art—
and not a single albatross?—
The list is so compressed it begs another point of view:
There is some expansion, surely one considers loss.

Lips cannot kiss every minute, every hour,
The sea recedes like sexual deflation,
The nose in all its arrogance can never smell every
single flower.

Some women promise you no breaking-off, no gap—
Then one glorious afternoon you think is all-out love,
She yawns, a chasm in her mouth, proceeds to take a
nap.

Somewhere the long-struck harp is mute—
There are no bridges in the silence of the house,
The pictures pornographic, the table decked with bitten
fruit.

There at sea you swear you glimpse a shipwreck—
Your gleaming body says, you say, it still adores the
world,
But cannot shake the heavy feeling of a weight around
the neck.

Resignation rises in between the close interstices—
Bagged and feeling beaked, you clear the table, gather
musty clothes,
Kiss the woman wide awake, and make the bird itself
pick up the pieces.

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Tough Tamales

by J.O. Tate

Anna Mycek-Wodecki

Maybe I should hop a jet to Vegas for a weekend at the dice tables or hang out in Beverly Hills for a while. Maybe I should bang a couple of hookers or sniff some cocaine—you know, something recreational to change my mood. I went in the library again and it didn't do me any good.

Call me crazy, call me a dreamer, but I think that James Madison and Arnold Rothstein and Lucky Luciano and the other founding fathers of our country wanted me to have whatever I want whenever I want it. And let me tell you something: the way the market is going, everybody can afford it. Is this a great country or what? But you'll never know how great it is until you get out of that library. The stacks are a real drag.

I can't even remember when it was I started to lose it. All I wanted to read about was some simple hits and exciting stuff like that, like you see all the time on the cable, when I made the mistake of picking up Jonathan Kwitny's *Vicious Circles: The Mafia's Control of the American Marketplace* (1979). This book really brought me down. It was all about the Mob in the meat business, unions, cheese, trucking, banking and finance, the docks, clothing, booze, and corporations. I didn't want to hear about that stuff—too complicated, too many facts. And I must admit Kwitny really grossed me out when he declared that the Mafia was "the largest American criminal conspiracy since the secession of the Confederacy." You see? Organized crime and American history really *are* the same thing. That's what I've been trying to tell you. Tommy "Stonewall" Giacsonni, James "Warhorse" Longostrada, you remember those guys.

Well, Clinard and Yeager's *Corporate Crime* (1980) was also dull. It was more about white collar stuff. Am I missing something, or aren't those guys, the white collar criminals I mean, just yuppies trying to get along and make a buck? If it wasn't for them, the stock market wouldn't be so high. Clinard and Yeager are some kind of low-rent party-poopers if you ask me, and if you didn't, I'm telling you anyway.

Next case. *Corporate Crime and Violence: Big Business Power and the Abuse of the Public Trust* by Russell Mokhiber (1988) was a real root-canal. Mokhiber never met a scam he liked. He dumps on Love Canal, thalidomide, Bhopal, Agent Orange, the Corvair, you name it. He sounds like Ralph Nader. I wonder if he is a real American. He doesn't seem to have any appreciation of moxie.

By now I was feeling like Huey Lewis and the News. I needed a new drug. I figured I also needed a suppressor for my Sig Sauer because I was going to blast the next guy who rained on my parade, you know what I mean? But *Indecent Exposure: A True Story of Hollywood and Wall Street* (1982) by David McClintick was more about routine lying and stealing than anything else and I didn't even get annoyed with it though by now my back was starting in on me. I needed a steam bath and not a bath house, if you get my drift.

I kept plugging, looking for some action. Then I hit pay dirt. *The Mafia Mystique* by Dwight C. Smith, Jr. (1974) was a lot more my style. As far as I'm concerned, Professor Smith proved that the Mafia doesn't exist but is only a bunch of clichés that haven't changed since New Orleans in 1890. And he is a professor, not some goombah trying to organize a civil rights league like Joe Columbo. And you remember what happened to Joe. I was starting to cheer up.

Maybe this whole thing was going to work out, because *Crime, Crusades, and Corruption: Prohibitions in the United States 1900—1987* by Michael Woodiwiss (1988) blamed everything on the cops and the feds. My thoughts exactly! Residual puritanism and resentment of victimless crimes had led to a spiral of corruption mostly to be blamed on old fogeys and the police. Woodiwiss was my favorite so far. I wondered why it took a Limey to understand how this country really works. I mean, if a guy wants to roll the bones, get laid, and get high (in whatever order), that's his business. And the judges and the old ladies should butt out.

But then I crashed. Stephen Fox really brought me down with *Blood and Power: Organized Crime in Twentieth-Century America* (1989). I hate to admit that his was the best book I looked at, because he was real tough on the wise guys. I think that Fox has his values screwed up, but otherwise I have to admit he knows a lot about what's been happening. The trouble is that he thinks all the good things (the booze, the broads, the numbers, the drugs, above all the millions) are bad things. He's

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a real head case and I have just one question for Mr. Foxy. If gambling is so corrupt, then how come the states are sponsoring lotteries and all the people are flocking to the casinos? Answer me that one, Mr. Smarty Pants!

Jill Jonnes' *Hep-Cats, Narcs, and Pipe Dreams: A History of America's Romance With Illegal Drugs* (1996) sounded like a stone groove but was another bad trip. Jonnes knows all about drugs, but would you believe she's against them? And not only the drugs but the money and crime and corruption. Women. Can't live with 'em.

Well, by now I was desperate. I headed over to the periodicals. There had to be something good for my head in this library somewhere. And no old bat librarian had better cross me, either. Yeah, I was carrying. I never met a librarian yet who wanted to get whacked, but you never know what you might run into. I did run into a librarian one time, actually, but that was on the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway.

Anyway, it was a real boost to read (in the *New York Times* of July 12) that "A lobbying blitz by some of the biggest names in corporate America has succeeded in maintaining a corporate tax break for multinational corporations—one that allows them to avoid United States taxes and reduce their foreign tax bill, too." The loophole involving "hybrid structures" was pushed by Philip Morris, General Motors, Microsoft, Merrill Lynch, Xerox, Exxon, Hallmark Cards, and Coca-Cola. "This measure signaled that Congress can't stand up to industry," declared Michael McIntyre, a tax law professor at Wayne State University. "It's outrageous, and as tax policy, it is indefensible. This is so far beyond the pale of what is considered legitimate tax avoidance." What does he know? Give me a break.

Senator William V. Roth, Republican of Delaware and chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, was instrumental in the negotiations with the Clinton administration, standing up on principle for the interests of the people of Delaware in the matter, not to mention the people of the United States. I chugalugged one of those little bottles of vodka that this obliging stewardess slipped me the last time I flew into Vegas. That made me feel good. I could rest easier knowing how attentive to detail and to the higher responsibilities of his office Senator Roth has shown himself to be. He manned the ramparts for the multinationals while the Democrats were taking money from China. No wonder this country is in such great shape, with statesmanship like that. I was feeling better already, maybe two amphetamines worth. The books had me going both ways, like speedballs.

Now I wouldn't want to say that anything is criminal because I am a stand-up guy and nobody ever called me a rat or a squealer. But how could anything be anything but legit when these so-called "crimes" are committed by so many lawyers and legislators, the people responsible for defining what crime is? I mean you got to follow the money and see where the money is because that is the market and the market is what's legit, capish? That's capitalism, pal. You got a problem with that? But then the whole thing, the *res publica*, is fogged by some kind of residual confusion. Maybe it should be called not the Republic but the Cosa Nostra. It is, after all, whatever it is, Our Thing. Of course it is. And if we keep reading the *New York Times* of July 12, we can find out all about it. Our Thing is good, it's American and it works. It's even yummy. And the price is right. I was starting to get the munchies even without any dope when I read this great thing in the paper about what a piece of work Las Vegas is.

The front page human interest story, "For Las Vegas Locals, Heavy Action Is at the Buffet," tells all about how to pig out at the cheap spreads that the Las Vegas casinos present to lure the suckers—make that, happy consumers. Frank Bruni really laid it on in his account of the consumer troughs. Only the walls stopped the ethnic sub-buffets (food tables, not gaming tables) from going on forever. They keep the locals waddling, not to mention the millions of visitors. But I kind of missed in Bruni's cute account anything about the real background of Las Vegas, what they call the context, and that was not beside the point. That *was* the point. Could there possibly be a connection between the cozy formation of national tax policy and the rollover for the public relations of the corporations that now own the casinos of Las Vegas? You better believe it.

Gee whiz, even I rather missed in Bruni's picture of America's dream place something of the surrounding aspect, the history, and I am no puff pastry. You know what I mean—the local color. The illustrated directories of prostitutes—the ones they hawk on the streets—kind of got left out. What about the losers, the suicides, the alcoholics, the addicts? What about the environmental distortions, the jerry-rigged electricity, the stolen water? What about the murders, the car-bombings, the Mafia and Teamster money, the racketeering, the crooked wheels, the shaved dice, the marked cards? All those Robert DeNiro, Joe Pesci-type stories? Las Vegas gives you what you want when you want it, the air-conditioning and the ice cubes and swimming pools and golf courses in the desert, and, above all, gambling of every kind. Las Vegas is Our Thing, just like Washington, D.C. Robert Venturi has made the argument about the buildings and lights. Frank Sinatra and Elvis Presley have made the argument with songs. Millions of Americans have made the argument into a moral and social thing by showing up.

And others have made different arguments. The drug-induced vision of James Toback's screenplay for the glitzy Warren Beatty/Annette Bening vehicle, *Bugsy* (1992), began to roll in my head like a video. In the flick, when Bugsy Siegel gets his Big Idea about how to organize Las Vegas and build the Flamingo, the joy of the moment is conveyed as though that hard case was a bighearted kid like Mickey Rooney playing Andy Hardy. Bugsy wanted to give the people what *they* wanted—he is a founding father, a visionary benefactor. In the movie, his clip of Big Greenie Greenbaum is a mercy killing consented to by the hapless victim—a favor to a pal who gets put out of his misery, whereas actually it was a Mob hit coordinated from New York. Bugsy practices his elocution and works on his tan as a latter-day Jay Gatsby or Benjamin Franklin, a self-inventor. He did indeed want to be a movie star and hung out in Hollywood. But the movie doesn't show anything about the influence of the Mob in Hollywood, or the big studios' deals with the mobster who later got whacked, Willie Bioff. Bugsy was wired with every dirty deal in Los Angeles all the way to the District Attorney's office, and with the corporations as well. The movie *Bugsy* has to remind you that Hollywood has always had a thing about crooks. Siegel's sense of public relations and his great clothes made him real Hollywood. Racketeering is cool—if you have a nice haircut. Now anyone can walk into Las Vegas and pretend to live in the fast lane until the bill comes due. That's what the Mob did for this country and we love it. We are a made country, living in a gangster movie. Hey, Lucky Luciano was in the Hotel Arkansas in Hot Springs

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on the lam from Dewey back in the 1930's. Hot Springs was connected. You ever heard of anybody from Hot Springs?

A couple more small vodkas and I realized that Bugsy is important, all right, though perhaps not exactly as James Toback and Barry Levinson and Warren Beatty presented him. They didn't go far enough. He stands for several notable American impulses besides self-transformation, which was in his case as in most others a form of lying. He stands for the principle of complete unscrupulousness in all aspects of existence; for the triumph of image over reality; and for pandering to people's worst instincts as a form of liberation. For Bugsy, desire was reason. That and his style was what made him such a great guy. No wonder Hollywood loved him, and still does. The satanic Bugsy Siegel is the saint of a view of life which we recognize as contemporary America. And not only that. Because there is a legend that Siegel wanted to bump off Mussolini (in one version) or even prominent Nazis (in another), he has been presented as a hero of Jewish strength as well. Would I kid you? After all, what is exempted today from revision according to identity group politics? But perhaps we can turn to another example. With my head so clogged by drugs and booze and trying to remember what the vig is on my gambling debts and also to call my broker and the guy who cooks my taxes, it was hard for me to sort out all the stuff in my head but I gave it a try.

I always liked *The Godfather* and I'll never forget those movies but I was sorry they had such an unhappy ending. Because for the country there was nothing but a happy ending. I mean they gave the country Las Vegas and Lake Tahoe and they agreed to distribute drugs and they did the numbers and the gambling and everything else that was what the people wanted or they would have been out of business. They shot the guy in the eye who was Bugsy Siegel under another name in the movie and everything turned out great except for their enemies and Michael Corleone who was miserable because he was married to Diane Keaton and also he had to kill his brother. Sometimes you might have to clip somebody because business is business, but the way I look at it, nobody has to marry Diane Keaton and that was the part that really tore me up.

But the greatest thing about *The Godfather* was what I call the patriotic or the national part. Like when the old man told Michael that they would have to wait a generation until one of them became a senator, and by God I think some of them have. Then later there was the crooked senator and Michael had his number all right. Michael had said they would go legit but by the time they did, they found that the legit stuff was crooked too. Because with the senator at his place, Michael had it made except for Diane Keaton and had more or less taken over the country. And the country was more like him, crowding into Las Vegas for the buffet and everybody having a great time except for Michael. Maybe it wasn't only Diane Keaton. Maybe it was Al Pacino because he always looks like he swallowed a bad olive.

But there are so many other movies like that, with the sad ending. *Men of Respect* is one of them. I recognized the plot from the tenth grade because back then you had to read in high school. The whole thing was *Macbeth*, but I think it was a mistake. Shakespeare didn't know as much about business as he thought he did. I mean, he has this guy clipping his boss because of a gypsy fortune teller. Now it's been known to happen, but never because of a fortune teller. The other thing I didn't like was that the Macbeth guy was all the time naked in his bedroom, but the woman, a tough guy until she freaked out at the end, never was even once. Somebody got their priorities backwards, but you know those artistic types.

Anyway, we don't have a Godfather now. What we have is "Godfather Pizza," which everybody likes. The guys in *The Godfather* were mostly Italian-Americans. They knew how to make good tomato sauce, and after a hit, they didn't forget the cannoli. But remember what Joseph Valachi said, even when he was squealing to the feds: "I'm not talking about Italians. I'm talking about criminals." He got that right.

I was starting to get clear again. I wished somebody had told Rich Cohen about how criminals aren't ethnic groups nor vice versa because I found his new book, *Tough Jews: Fathers, Sons, and Gangster Dreams*, in the new acquisitions section of the library and wished I hadn't. Mr. Cohen's view of America is a bit weird though published by the establishment (Simon & Schuster). But nothing has damped his sales or kept Mario Cuomo and Larry [Zieger] King from endorsing his book, even though King is cited numerous times in the book he touts. I guess business is business.

I was real let down that Rich Cohen would write even one sentence in *Tough Jews* which would mislead anyone into thinking that it is not a love letter to dead thugs: "I don't want to glamorize what these men did." Why doesn't he? He did, anyway. He really smarms over those hitmen but let me tell you, Murder, Inc., wasn't any Hadassah meeting. Anyway, he writes like he was there when he wasn't even born then, he tells us what the hard cases "must have" felt, and he keeps making with the poetry. He's got all the hits and all the deals mixed up with the holocaust and the raid on Entebbe. Yeah, with Rich Cohen like in the movies, you get violins with your violence. But back in the old days, the guys didn't have any violins in those violin cases, you know what I'm saying? Ice-picking a guy 60 times isn't exactly planting trees in Israel. I wondered why Rich Cohen never figured out that Nazi goons had a lot in common with his Jewish gangsters, but not for long. Like I say, there are a lot of confused people in this world. I mean, there it was right in the library for all to see but he wouldn't look it up. Paul Johnson drew us the picture in *Modern Times* of Ribbentrop in the Kremlin, setting the stage for World War II—and the holocaust: "As the tipsy killers lurched about the room, fumblingly hugging each other, they resembled nothing so much as a congregation of rival gangsters, who had fought each other before, and might do so again, but were essentially in the same racket."

So I decided to blow that dump of a library because I needed to get my shirts and my money laundered. I figured I had learned two things. One was that vodka corrupts, but Absolut vodka corrupts Absolutly. The other was that you could find a Gideon Bible even in a Las Vegas suite. By the time I got off the red-eye and adjusted my attitude, I would be ready to read about the golden calf before I hit the tables, looking for some action.

I racked the slide on my Sig in the parking lot, just like in an Elmore Leonard novel. It's unregistered, chambered for 9 mil., and loaded with hollow-points. If any one of those old broads from the circulation desk had been there to mess with me, I would have cleaned her clock for her. As it was, there was nothing wrong with me that a Diet Pepsi couldn't fix. To hell with the library. Forget about it. Books are just another racket, only with no buffet, no chicks, and no payoff. C

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Running With the Mob

No Swans in the Sewer

by Jerry Seper

Anna Mycek-Wodecki

The New York Mob ain't dead, but it's far from the robust times it enjoyed when the five New York crime families—Bonanno, Colombo, Gambino, Genovese, and Lucchese—single-handedly controlled the city's powerful labor unions and ran roughshod over the burgeoning construction, trucking, garbage-hauling, and garment industries. Federal, state, and local law enforcement officials, who have waged a sometimes brutal battle against the five La Cosa Nostra families for more the 60 years, estimate that no more than 750 "made" members (those who have taken the oath of silence) have a continuing allegiance to one of the city's crime families, with only about 7,500 "associates" (professional criminals whose livelihood is derived principally from the Mob's criminal enterprises) still on the street. That compares to an active membership in New York of more than 3,000 made members just a few years ago, with the total number of associates estimated at upwards of 20,000 in 1993. One in every ten made members is in jail, including several former New York bosses and their top aides.

A similar story rings true throughout the country, where 24 La Cosa Nostra crime families operate nationwide with an estimated workforce of less than 1,500 made members. The downward spiral of members and associates continues, despite La Costa Nostra's continued presence across the country: the East Coast, from Philadelphia to Boston; west to Buffalo and other Great Lakes cities; Miami, Tampa, and Atlanta in the Southeast; New Orleans and Houston in the South and Southwest; Kansas City, Denver, Phoenix, and Las Vegas in the Midwest and West; and California on the West Coast.

Jerry Seper is a reporter for the Washington Times.

Former U.S. Attorney Joseph diGenova, a veteran federal prosecutor, believes the Mob has been "severely weakened" by several high-profile prosecutions. Those cases, he told me, had forged "major inroads" into the inner workings and the hierarchy of the various crime families. "La Cosa Nostra has changed dramatically over the past few years, and is now almost gone from many cities," he said. "It still has a foothold in places like New York, Philadelphia, and Boston, but not anywhere near what it use to be."

Now in private practice in Washington, D.C., Mr. diGenova said several "truly crippling prosecutions" were responsible for the Mob's demise, along with the changing character of those who now run the organizations. He described the Mob's new leaders as less sophisticated and less capable of running their organizations. And several of the crime syndicates are indeed now run by acting leaders, having no permanent boss or no one in line for the job. The resulting leadership vacuum has splintered and decentralized the once-strong mob hierarchy.

Justice Department officials, who have vowed to "eliminate the influence" of traditional crime organizations, also believe the Mob nationwide has suffered severe setbacks from continuing—and successful—government prosecutions, particularly those against the bosses of the Colombo, Gambino, and Lucchese families, and from competition by less organized but more violent Asian gangs, the Crips and the Bloods, outlaw motorcycle gangs, the Jamaican posse, and others. Mr. diGenova said emerging Asian and black gangs have replaced many of the La Cosa Nostra operations throughout the country that in earlier times were rooted in Irish, Italian, and Jewish communities. "The ascendancy of new groups is not a surprise," he said. "It's

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part of the normal evolution of organized crime groups." Meanwhile, several of La Cosa Nostra's old haunts, mainly the social clubs along the infamous Mulberry Street in Little Italy, have shut down or become trendy shops and restaurants.

Despite the decline of the old-line guard and the rise of new Mob bosses and underlings more committed to self-interest than to old values of loyalty, the crime organizations' often-profitable criminal ventures persist in several areas of the country. And while their numbers have dwindled, they still are active players in a number of dangerous criminal ventures, including murder, drugs, money laundering, weapons sales, labor racketeering, extortion, burglary, loan sharking, arson, immigration fraud, and auto theft. However, according to federal law enforcement authorities, a significant amount of the drug trade—that lucrative business that netted the Mob millions of dollars annually—has been lost to other crime syndicates, including the Colombian and Mexican gangs who bypass the same La Cosa Nostra bosses who once demanded a piece of the action.

Historically, La Cosa Nostra, by necessity, has operated on at least two levels, one more secretive than the other. Everyday crime—gambling, loansharking, and drugs—require contact with an often eager consumer. But the infiltration of legitimate businesses and labor unions is an invisible foray—deeply hidden from law enforcement scrutiny.

One sign that the Mob's influence—particularly in New York—is on the wane is a decline of meetings by the bosses of the five La Costa Nostra families. Calling themselves the Commission, the bosses met often to discuss internal problems and to coordinate their various criminal enterprises. Law enforcement authorities believe the Commission—established in 1931 by Mob boss Charles "Lucky" Luciano—has gone out of business.

"It's too early to tell if the Commission is permanently dead," Daniel J. Castleman, chief of investigations for the Manhattan District Attorney's Office, told the *New York Times*. Prosecutors believe the Commission has not met since 1996, crippled by a lack of leadership from the five families. "Without a Commission there will be significant disruption in the ability of organized crime to victimize people and to make a comeback in the industries they once dominated," Mr. Castleman said.

Much of the decline of the Mob relates to decisions by key La Cosa Nostra figures to violate the syndicate's code of silence, the *omerta*. One high-profile defection was Salvatore "Sammy the Bull" Gravano, one-time Gambino *consigliere*, who broke the code to testify against his former boss, John Gotti. Gotti, the 55-year-old, brash-talking Mob boss known as the "Dapper Don," was convicted in 1992 on racketeering charges, including ordering the 1985 murder of former Gambino boss Paul Castellano. The conviction, in the government's fourth attempt, was based largely on Gravano's testimony.

The guilty verdict, coming after just 13 hours of deliberation by a sequestered and anonymous jury in Brooklyn, was the climax of a six-year effort by federal prosecutors to put Gotti away. Three previous trials (in 1986, 1987, and 1989) ended in acquittal, earning him the nickname "Teflon Don" when the charges did not stick. Gotti and co-defendant Frank "Locks" Locascio, 59, a Gambino underboss, were found guilty of murder, conspiracy, racketeering, gambling, loansharking, obstruction of justice, bribery, and tax fraud. He was sentenced in June 1992 by U.S. District Judge Leo Glasser in Brooklyn to life in prison.

At the time, the Gambino family was considered the largest and most active La Cosa Nostra operation in the country, with 200 members and more than 2,000 associates. Named after Carlo Gambino, the late boss of bosses, the organization operated throughout New York, Connecticut, New Jersey, and Florida and was involved in murder, drug smuggling, money laundering, gambling, embezzlement, extortion, labor racketeering, loansharking, hijacking, airport thefts, and pornography. Crime profits, estimated at $500 million a year, had been used to infiltrate several legitimate businesses, including the garment industry, banking and finance, construction, entertainment, restaurants, food products, liquor sales, manufacturing, and medical services.

"The Teflon is gone. The don is covered with Velcro, and all the charges stuck," said James Fox, special agent in charge of the FBI's New York office. Attorney General William P. Barr called Gotti's conviction "a major victory in the department's continuing assault on organized crime." He said, "Although more remains to be done, we are making substantial progress in dismantling these organizations."

Mr. Barr, now in private law practice, told the *Washington Times* that federal prosecutors have made deals with "unsavory characters" in high-profile drug and racketeering cases in order to win convictions. And, he argued, that policy should continue. "There are no swans in sewers," he said. "When you're dealing with criminal organizations, including governments that have been corrupted, there's only one way to get to the leadership—and that's through the people who are subordinate. Our capacity to use informants and to turn people within organizations against the leadership, that's why we're seeing a lot of progress." Mr. Barr said that while defense counsel and others have characterized the plea agreements with criminals as "sweetheart deals," he would prefer to describe them as "appropriate."

Part of the government's case against Gotti was based on tapes secretly recorded by the FBI at the Ravenite social club in Brooklyn, which served as Gotti's headquarters. The Mob boss was heard on the tapes giving orders and describing the organization's business. On one tape, Gotti bragged about his "greatest hits"—and included a reference to the Castellano slaying. In all, Gotti discussed more than a dozen murders and talked about several Mob hits that were considered, and he also discussed the organization's secret business dealings and named several associates.

"Some people believe he failed to take the necessary precautions to protect the family," said a New York police detective. "Wiseguys generally walk on the street or on the boardwalk or at a park when they talk about the business—somewhere they feel safe. Gotti's on more tape than most disc jockeys."

What ultimately sealed Gotti's fate was the willingness of "Sammy the Bull" Gravano to testify against his former boss. The agreement, according to authorities, was worked out with federal prosecutors after Gravano had spent 11 months in the same jail cell with Gotti awaiting trial. Gravano's wife, they said, begged her husband not to testify.

His testimony sent shockwaves throughout the hierarchies of the city's other crime families—two of whom, the Genovese and Bonanno organizations, are now so leery of Mob meetings that they refuse to attend them, including the Commission sessions. The Genovese family is considered by law enforcement authorities the most active crime syndicate today, with 250 made members, followed by the Gambino family with about

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200 members and the Bonanno and Lucchese families with only about 100 members each.

Gravano, who himself was targeted for prosecution in the Castellano killing, showed in court that he had direct access to Gotti, knowledge of the family's illegal business dealings, and firsthand information on Gotti's activities. Facing life in prison for his reputed connection to the Castellano-Bilotti murders, the mobster-turned-informant reportedly cut a deal with federal prosecutors in exchange for his testimony. He heads a growing list of high-ranking mobsters who have turned their backs on La Cosa Nostra's infamous code of silence to become government informants.

"It used to be unheard of for a made member to turn on the family," William F. Roemer, Jr., who headed the FBI's organized crime strike force in Chicago for more than 25 years, said in an interview before his recent death. "But the code of silence, the *omerta*, has been eroded," he said. "Top Mob leaders from around the country are seeking to cooperate as a viable alternative to spending 30 or 40 years in prison. Many are beginning to find out that, unlike the past, they *can* get away with it."

Jim E. Moody, veteran chief of the FBI's organized crime section in Washington, said La Cosa Nostra members today are "realists," and that many of them who agree to testify "see it is an option to spending the rest of their lives in prison. They know that under the new sentencing guidelines, if they get 88 years in prison, they're going to be there for 88 years—or until they die."

The willingness of La Cosa Nostra members to go to prison rather than testify against family members began to change in 1981 with the advent of the FBI's "enterprise theory of investigation," which allowed the bureau to target crime families instead of individual members. Aided by informants who could be protected, new criminal and civil racketeering statutes, and, eventually, tougher sentencing guidelines, this approach targeted crime bosses and disrupted La Cosa Nostra organizations. Since 1981, more than 1,000 made members and associates have been convicted in federal courts. The hierarchies of the five New York families have been prosecuted, and La Cosa Nostra activities in Boston, Cleveland, Denver, Kansas City, Milwaukee, New Jersey, Los Angeles, and St. Louis have been targeted.

Prosecutors believe a major reason for the FBI's success against La Cosa Nostra has been the witness security program, which can hide federal informants in or out of prison, and provide protection for their families. "They still die if they get caught, and they understand that," said Mr. Roemer. "But with the witness security program, getting caught is much less a certainty."

A growing number of mobsters and associates have been willing to break La Cosa Nostra's infamous code of silence over the past three decades. They include:

Alfonse D'Arco: an acting boss of the Lucchese crime family who agreed to cooperate with federal authorities in a labor-racketeering trial in New York involving alleged bid-rigging in several multimillion-dollar projects.

Aladena Fratianno: a former acting boss of the Los Angeles Mob and a Mob captain in Cleveland, "Jimmy the Weasel" Fratianno gave testimony that led to the convictions of five Mob bosses in Los Angeles on charges of racketeering.

Angelo Lonardo: underboss of the Cleveland crime family, now facing a 103-year prison sentence, Lonardo was instrumental in later court cases involving the Mob and was the highest-ranking member ever to defect.

Vincent Teresa: the Number Three man in the New England Mob, "Fat Vinny" Teresa—facing imprisonment at a federal prison in Pennsylvania—testified against Mob figures from Florida to Massachusetts, resulting in the indictment or conviction of more than 50 organized crime bosses, including Meyer Lansky, the Mob's biggest moneymaker.

Joseph Valachi: while being questioned by the FBI in September 1963, Valachi became the first Mob member to confirm the existence of La Cosa Nostra in the United States. Later, in testimony before the Senate permanent subcommittee on investigations, he described the organization's inner workings.

Even Nicholas "The Little Guy" Corozzo, once considered Gotti's heir-apparent, pleaded guilty in 1997 to federal racketeering charges. In a deal with federal authorities for a lesser sentence, he pleaded guilty to one count of conspiring to violate racketeering laws. The deal, which required his cooperation in other cases, netted him a 13-year reduction on his sentence. ☜

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MOBOCRACY

"The realist in murder writes of a world in which gangsters can rule nations and almost rule cities, in which hotels and apartment houses and celebrated restaurants are owned by men who made their money out of brothels, in which a screen star can be the fingerman for a Mob, and the nice man down the hall is a boss of the numbers racket; a world where a judge with a cellar full of bootleg liquor can send a man to jail for having a pint in his pocket, where the mayor of your town may have condoned murder as an instrument of money-making, where no man can walk down a dark street in safety because law and order are things we talk about but refrain from practising; a world where you may witness a hold-up in broad daylight and see who did it, but you will fade quickly back into the crowd rather than tell anyone, because the hold-up men may have friends with long guns, or the police may not like your testimony, and in any case the shyster for the defense will be allowed to abuse and vilify you in open court, before a jury of selected morons, without any but the most perfunctory interference from a political judge."

—from Raymond Chandler, "The Simple Art of Murder"

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The "Russian" Mafia in America

by Wayne Allensworth

Anna Mycek-Wodecki

In October 1996, during testimony before a congressional committee, FBI Director Louis Freeh spent a good part of his time discussing international organized crime. Freeh, pointing to the FBI's arrest of one Vyacheslav Ivankov—the reputed "godfather" of the Russian mafia who is now serving a ten-year sentence in a federal pen in New York—emphasized the threat that organized crime from the Former Soviet Union (FSU) posed to American security. *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, probably the most widely read newspaper among Russian elites, reported that "this theme"—the global threat represented by the Russian mafia—was "gleefully developed" by Western media, which publishes and broadcasts "more and more menacing details about crimes committed by Russian mafiosi." The paper's Aleksandr Sharev further claimed, probably correctly, that the firestorm over the Russian mafia had been ignited by a study published in the United States in 1996 by the Center for Strategic Studies (CSS), which "blew the Russian mafia threat up to almost worldwide dimensions."

The Russians, ever sensitive to the West's alleged Russophobia, reacted sharply. Former Minister of Internal Affairs (the MVD, responsible for police and internal troops) Anatoli Kulikov blasted Freeh and the CSS study, claiming that the exaggerated accounts of Russian Al Capones were being spread in order to "isolate Russia politically and economically." Freeh, in deference to Kulikov, thereafter softened his remarks. But the question of just what, exactly, the "Russian mafia" is, and how big a threat it represents, were never adequately addressed, and the best way to answer these questions is to backtrack along the trail of Ivankov himself—better known, in the FSU underworld, as the "Yaponchik" ("the Jap").

According to the MVD Directorate for the Fight Against Organized Crime, there are over 4,000 organized crime groups operating in the FSU. The organizations vary greatly in size and type. Many are ethnically organized: a Russian, or more exactly, Eastern Slavic (including Belorussians and Ukrainians) mafia does exist, as does a primarily Jewish mafia, an Azeri mafia, a Georgian mafia, and a Chechen mafia (similar in origins and organization to the Sicilian Cosa Nostra). Other gangs are organized operationally: some specialize in trafficking narcotics, others in racketeering, still others in contract murders, money laundering, or arms smuggling. In this milieu, it may be more accurate to call the "Russian" mafia a "Russian-speaking" mafia, whose constituent members sometimes belong primarily to one group but interact and cooperate, either as an organization or as individuals, with other gangs and gangsters. Taken as a whole, the "mafia" is more like a network of criminal organizations than a tightly organized monolith.

According to the MVD, some 174 of these FSU organizations are operating abroad, mainly in the United States, Israel, and Europe. The leader of a gang is called the *vor v zakone*, an untranslatable term that signified senior status in the age-old loosely organized Russian brotherhood of thieves (*vor* means "thief" in Russian), and it was into this brotherhood that the young Ivankov was initiated some years ago.

Born in 1940 in Moscow, the child, who would acquire the moniker "Yaponchik" because of his narrow, slanted eyes, displayed athletic talent and a violent temper. Constantly in trouble as a result of his fighting, the young Ivankov, who had earlier been trained as an acrobat, took up boxing. (It is a peculiarity of the Soviet era that criminal gangs were often organized in the state-sponsored sports clubs.) The young gang members might first cut their teeth on simple theft, then graduate to higher forms of the criminal arts after a stint in prison, where they often were initiated in the ancient Russian thieves' brotherhood, where status is determined by the willingness of the young initiate to kill. Ivankov began his criminal career in the 1960's and served time in the Irkutsk, Magadan, and Tulun prison camps and the dreaded Vladimir Central prison where he acquired the status of *vor v zakone*, relentlessly enforcing the brotherhood's code of conduct (the Yaponchik was reportedly the most feared member of the thieves' brotherhood) and via corrupt prison officials maintaining contacts with his gangland patrons

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Wayne Allensworth writes from Purcellville, Virginia, and is the author of The Russian Question: Nationalism, Modernization, and Post-Communist Russia (*Rowman & Littlefield*).

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outside the barbed wire of the camps.

Ivankov's patrons included the notorious "Mongol," Gennadi Korkov, the Georgian *vor v zakone* Otari Kvantrishvili (Kvantrishvili was the Bugsy Siegel of Soviet/FSU gangdom, and his opulent funeral in 1994—which attracted luminaries from business and politics, as well as from gangland—might have made Johnny Torrio blush with envy), and Vyacheslav Sliva, with whom the Yaponchik had organized his own gang. Their activities were typical of Soviet-era gangsters: robbing the apartments of jewelers and antique collectors, shaking down black marketeers, and "protecting" illegal gambling and prostitution rings. According to some accounts, the Yaponchik also contracted out his unique services, in this case beatings and murders, to the KGB, who sometimes needed gangsters to perform delicate operations for them. It may have been such contacts that enabled Ivankov to secure an early release from a 14-year prison sentence he received for extortion in 1981. After serving ten years (there is evidence that the Yaponchik, who by this time had emerged as one of the leading figures in the Soviet-era organized crime world, not only operated his criminal empire from within the walls of prison, but lived a life of comparative luxury that many Soviet citizens would have envied), he was released after several prominent public figures pleaded his case to then president Mikhail Gorbachev and then chairman of the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet, Boris Yeltsin. At any rate, the Yaponchik had kept close tabs on the momentous changes going on during the *perestroika* era and saw opportunities for expansion that had been undreamed of by the famed thieves of the Russian brotherhood's past.

Yaponchik wanted to modernize the Soviet Union's underworld, and to do this he first had to deal with the Chechens. During the late Soviet period, the Chechen Cosa Nostra openly operated across Russia and impudently occupied the gigantic Rossiya hotel, whose windows looked out on the citadel of Russian power, the Kremlin (anyone who visited the Rossiya in the late 80's and early 90's can testify to the sea of black limos, hulking bodyguards, and black-fedoraed Chechen godfathers/clan leaders with their signature black leather jackets and droopy mustaches that encroached on Red Square itself). A relentless war of contract murders, organized by the Yaponchik's hand-picked man, veteran killer Andrei Isayev, who goes by the name "Rospis" ("Signature"), was waged against the "blacks," the Caucasian Chechens and Azeris who were moving in on the turf of the Slavic, Georgian, and Jewish gangsters. But this war was also over new opportunities and emerging markets for gang activity: narcotics and control over newly opened casinos, hotels, car dealerships, television stations, and banks. The war continues to this day, with the gangs standing behind—or alongside—many of the "new Russians," the rising entrepreneurial class of real estate, banking, media, and raw materials (especially oil) magnates. Shakedowns of the "new Russians" were common, but so was—and is—partnership and cooperation. Moreover, the civil wars raging in the corners of what would soon be the FSU opened up vast opportunities for arms trafficking (the Yaponchik is said to have invested heavily in arming participants in the struggle between Azeris and Armenians over Nagorno-Karabakh) and the smuggling of precious metals, including uranium. Moreover, as the Soviet Union began collapsing, the West, with its porous borders and untapped (for the Soviet/FSU mafia, anyway) markets, beckoned the FSU gangs.

By some accounts, the Yaponchik had organized a sort of criminal politburo that sought to resolve conflicts, punish dissenters, and divide up the turf and responsibilities of the organized crime groups. This gangster politburo supposedly sent Ivankov to manage the gangs' affairs in America. In any case, Ivankov left the Soviet Union in the spring of 1991 on a false passport and made his way illegally to New York City's Brighton Beach area. Brighton Beach is populated mainly by Russian-speaking immigrants, predominantly Jews, and it was here that Ivankov intimidated, murdered, and formed partnerships with Jewish gangsters. His closest business associates have reportedly been the Zilber brothers of Odessa, Vladimir and Alex. His American-based operation was called the "Organization" (*organizatsiya*) by insiders, and with it he helped many of his FSU minions enter the United States illegally with false identity papers. He then moved his base to Brooklyn, reportedly establishing solid business partnerships with the Genovese and Gambino mafia families and the Colombian cocaine cartels.

By 1995, the Yaponchik was riding high. The *organizatsiya* was expanding its operations to New Jersey, Los Angeles, Denver (where Ivankov had a residence), Miami, and Toronto and was even moving into the realm of professional sports: FSU gangsters have allegedly attempted to extort cash from Russian NHL hockey players Alexander Mogilny, Vladimir Malakhov, and Alexei Zhitnik. Moreover, Ivankov illegally visited Russia on several occasions to oversee his operations there.

Ivankov's arrest in 1995 on an extortion charge and subsequent sentencing to a federal prison may or may not signal the end of his criminal career. In any event, America should take note of his bloody career. First, Ivankov entered, left, and reentered the United States on numerous occasions illegally and was able to build a criminal empire here, acquiring property and consorting with crime bosses in New York, Los Angeles, and Miami—and he did all this without even knowing a word of English! The point is not to exaggerate the threat of the "Russian" mafia or to indulge in Russophobia, but rather to emphasize the laxity of American border controls and the threat posed by the New World Order of open borders, mass immigration, and transnational business.

These transnational gangsters, who now have political influence in their native lands and whose activities diminish the security of our own, *love* the "global economy." If the FSU mafia can shift assets across borders, acquire property, and move its members in and out of other states, so can the Colombian cocaine cartels, the Chinese Tongs (remember the little arms deal the Tongs wanted to make with L.A. street gangs?), and Mexican drug traffickers. Moreover, consider this tidbit from *Moskovskaya Pravda*:

> The American Cosa Nostra moved to the United States from Italy, whose population today totals about 58 million, while the population of the former Soviet republics comes to about 289 million! . . . It is clear that a great many significant organized criminal groups exist within this Eurasian population. It is the increased freedom of international travel, business opportunities, and shifting of financial assets that involuntarily facilitates spreading the problem of [FSU] crime to the United States.

As the trail of the Yaponchik clearly shows, America is indeed the Land of Opportunity. ©

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An American Bhagavadgita

by James Hill

"The United States of America—the greatest potential force, material, moral, and spiritual, in the world."
—G. Lowes Dickinson

A History of the American People
by Paul Johnson
New York: HarperCollins;
1088 pp., $35.00

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For Paul Johnson, American history was a non-subject in his days at Oxford and its School of Modern History in the 1940's. "Nothing was said of America, except insofar as it lay on the margins of English history," Johnson writes. "I do not recall any course of lectures on American history, as such." This, as it turned out, was actually to his advantage. "As a result of this lacuna in my education, I eventually came to American history completely fresh, with no schoolboy or student prejudices or antipathies."

His critics will say he has picked up quite a few in the ensuing years, but let that ride. The question one must ask is: Has this highly opinionated Englishman contributed to Americans' understanding of their history? The answer is yes, with a few reservations. A greater question might be whether Americans will appreciate his judgments, and here I think the odds are only so-so since we, as a people, are plainly in the process of de-Americanizing ourselves and our institutions. Johnson, while viewing this phenomenon with concern, nevertheless concludes his book on an optimistic note: he is betting that the American people, ultimately, will arrest their long free fall. I am not so sure.

What, really, makes someone an American? For most of the country's recent history, at least, citizenship was the

Anna Mycek Wodecki

defining element: you take the oath, you become an American. (An interesting curiosity, however, is that native-born Americans, as opposed to Native Americans, continue to identify themselves as Californians, Virginians, Kansans, New Englanders, Westerners, or Southerners first, and as Americans second—proof that the country remains less a "nation" than a federation of states and regions, each with its own cultural, geographic, and economic peculiarities.) Today, however, one can be a "hyphenated American" without, in fact, being an American at all. The test is in getting over the border by whatever means possible, and the U.S. Constitution, as it has been interpreted of late, takes over from there, conferring on you almost unlimited protections and benefits, including the right to vote. We are in danger of hyphenating away our nationhood, while the political pandering to the hyphenates themselves risks undoing the 400 years of nation-building and nationhood Johnson celebrates.

Worse, it risks destroying our ability to develop a coherent foreign policy in the country's interest at a time when we find ourselves the world's only superpower, and too often the world's policeman. In the post-World War II era, this liability has manifested itself primarily in Washington's unquestioned support of Israel—a policy that is currently being modified by the power of the growing Arab- and Islamic-American lobby. The national interest is additionally compromised by the Irish-American lobby, by Cuban-American enemies of Fidel Castro, by Chinese-Americans fighting a diplomatic war of liberation from American soil, and by aggressive Mexican-Americans seeking to replace Anglo-American culture with their own, "Hispanic" one. Assimilation, on the other hand, is usually a no-win proposition. Take the Serbs, a people who have been in America in large numbers for more than a century and who, despite their continued adherence to Orthodox Christianity, have gladly thrown themselves into the melting pot. Marginalized in the debate concerning American policy in the Balkans, they must endure daily the depiction of their people as racist murderers and rapists. Palestinian-Americans, having spent years assimilating before challenging finally America's reflexive support of Israel, know the feeling. So do German-Americans, Japanese-Americans, and others who, having committed themselves to the assimilationist ideal, found themselves at one time or another on the wrong side of

James Hill writes from Scottsdale, Arizona.

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American foreign policy or national security aims. Yet the assimilation of diverse populations, to the extent that it really occurred, made America and its people what they are today, as Johnson points out. "I do not acknowledge the existence of hyphenated Americans, or Native Americans or any other qualified kind," he writes. "They are all Americans to me: black, white, red, brown, yellow, thrown together by fate in that swirling maelstrom of history which has produced the most remarkable people the world has ever seen." The problem here is that Johnson's spirit of tolerant acceptance is completely at odds with the American political and cultural elite's determination to impose policies exacerbating racial, ethnic, and religious tensions in the name of cultural diversity, as well as, increasingly, with the attitude of the new Americans themselves.

Johnson is ruthless in his condemnation of political correctness and its allied sins. And he gives no quarter in condemning organized religion's surrender, in the face of a frontal assault on the part of government and the courts, of its moral authority. Still, a recurring (touchingly naive) theme throughout his long narrative is that, our present difficulties of nationhood notwithstanding, American history has been always thus: an epic battle in which the forces of good overcome the forces of evil, which not by coincidence arise—usually—from within. In Johnson's view, the United States achieved its remarkable accomplishments not because it was the country's destiny to do so but because it was a work in progress by a people who were left to solve their own, often brutally difficult problems in a way that would benefit the greatest number of them in the end.

Johnson describes effectively America's long collision course in respect of chattel slavery, and how the subject still tugs at the nation's conscience today. He is even better on the mistreatment of the indigenous Indian tribes which, contrary to myth, belongs not to the period of the country's western expansion, but its southeastern push in the early days of independence. Here, an entire region was opened to European settlement—and the expansion of the Peculiar Institution—by means of what we now call "ethnic cleansing": the forced resettlement of entire Indian nations to the sparse and untamed West. After this, the Indian question did not need to be dealt with again until decades later when, the issue of slavery having been settled in blood and the Union preserved, a restless population and new European immigrants sought greener pastures. By then—as now—the Trail of Tears was largely forgotten. The Western tribes, by contrast, even though many had also to endure relocation or sign treaties forcing them onto reservations, eventually won recognition of their sovereignty.

Readers of Johnson's previous works, including *Modern Times: The World From the Twenties to the Nineties* and *The Birth of the Modern: World Society, 1815-1830*, will easily recognize variations on themes first raised in those books. In spite of this elaboration, however, and the use of material first researched for the author's histories of Christianity and the Jews, there remains much to harvest. Even at more than 1,000 pages, *A History of the American People* takes too many shortcuts, particularly when Johnson gets to those definitive points in the development of America's nationhood: the Civil War, and World War I and II. Concerning the Civil War especially I find that a shame. A tremendous body of literature exists on the complexities leading up to that horrific conflict, and regarding it: to rush through it all seems a waste of this author's considerable talents and energies. The same can be said of Johnson's treatment of World War II and its aftermath, which also seems incomplete and unfulfilled.

The richness of the book, however, is to be found in the interpretation of everyday events that shaped the nation's character and destiny. Johnson defends some of the Robber Barons (most of whom ended up donating a good deal of their fortunes to the American people in the form of foundations, libraries, and art galleries, and their estates preserved as part of the nation's historic trust), but what he really celebrates is the scope America once gave its citizens for titanic endeavor and achievement. He raises the need to reinterpret the administrations of "failed" presidencies, such as those of Warren Harding and Calvin Coolidge, not because the assessments of them have been so bleak but because they were made so wrongly, with deliberate intent. (The debunking of the Camelot myth surrounding the administration of John F. Kennedy is a case of Johnson applying his formula in reverse, to even more convincing effect.) For Johnson, America really has been a land of opportunity—for exploiters, con artists, and other assorted hucksters and evildoers of the type Mark Twain captured so perfectly, as well as for honest hardworking men, the two groups combining to create not just a country but a history of truly epic proportions. As for Johnson's belief that a problem-solving people will keep moving onward and ever upward—well, we will just have to see. ©

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An Honorable Defeat

by Clyde Wilson

The Confederate War
by Gary W. Gallagher
Cambridge: Harvard University Press;
218 pp., $24.95

◆

Imagine America invaded by a foreign power, one that has quadruple the population and industrial base. Imagine that this enemy has free access to the world's goods as well as an inexhaustible supply of cannon fodder from the proletariat of other countries, while America itself is tightly blockaded from the outside world. New York and Cincinnati have been taken. For months, Boston and Chicago have been under constant siege, the civilian population driven from their homes. Enemy forces roam over large parts of the country burning the homes, tools, and food of the noncombatants in a campaign of deliberate terrorism. Nearly 85 percent of the nation's able-bodied men (up to 50 years of age) have been called to arms. Battlefield casualties have run to 39 percent and deaths amount to nearly half of that, far exceeding those from any other war. On the other hand, the enemy, though its acts and domestic propaganda indicate otherwise, is telling the American population that it wants only peace and the restoration of the status quo antebellum. Lay down your arms and all will be as before.

What would be our state of morale in such conditions? Americans have never suffered such misfortune, have they? Alas, they have. This was the experience of the Southern people from 1861-1865 in their lost War for Independence.

Gary Gallagher has established himself of late as one of the leading historians of the period, a somewhat surprising and consoling occurrence since he is an old-fashioned historian who relies on evidence and is not afraid to challenge fashionable interpretation by following where the evidence leads. *The Confederate War* examines with skill and careful research the forgotten Southern experience, which was marked by greater suffering and sacrifice than that ever made or endured by any other large group of Americans. Gallagher presents an important and ignored perspective for those who wish to grasp the sweep of American history in the cold light of reality rather than through the rose-colored glasses of democratic globalism.

War, in the experience of the American people, has typically brought suffering and death to only a small part of the inarticulate youthful population, mostly from the poorer classes; dislocation and discomfort to a larger segment; high wages and profits in general; and a great glow of patriotism and righteousness to the many. This was war as the North knew it (except that dissent was a great deal more widespread than has been admitted), setting the pattern for subsequent American conflicts. (We only have to think of the delight with which so many celebrated, from the comfort of their recliners, the incineration of Iraqi women and children.) It was not so, however, for the Southern people in that period. (Our author says nothing, of course, about Reconstruction.)

How hard the Southerners struggled for independence from the American Empire has been, and continues to be, suppressed by a nationalist culture that can only wonder: How could any group possibly have dissented from the greatest government on earth? But a very large number of Americans did *not* consent to that government (the regime, after all, was supposedly founded on the consent of the governed). They were willing to put their dissent on the line in a greater sacrifice than any large group of Americans has ever been called upon to make. Until finally, as a disappointed Union officer quoted by Gallagher remarked: "the rebellion [was] worn out rather than suppressed."

The burden of *The Confederate War* is that military defeat—not lack of faith in the cause, internal class struggle, want of sufficient nationalist theory, or any other such thing offered by recent historians as explanations—ended the War for Independence. Historiographically, Gallagher's work is juxtaposed, with evidence and close reasoning, with a raft of literature speculating upon the weaknesses of the South. One learns very early in academic historical training that a sure road to success lies in finding a new twist on South-hating, supported by quotations selected out of context and references to currently fashionable abstractions that pass for reasoning, such as that the South was not only evil but weak and stupid, its War for Independence having been waged ineffectively, inadequately, and incompetently. I can cite several cases where books along these lines have catapulted their authors into professional celebrity and endowed chairs. Writing history is easy if you only need theory and not evidence.

Gallagher, by contrast, has documented the obvious: the South was militarily defeated only after an extraordinary effort unmatched before or since by Americans. Given the sad state of American scholarship, to accomplish that much is cause for celebration.

Clyde Wilson is a professor of American history at the University of South Carolina.

Waugh After Waugh

by Andrei Navrozov

Will This Do? The First Fifty Years of Auberon Waugh: An Autobiography
by Auberon Waugh
New York: Carroll & Graf Publishers;
288 pp., $24.00

◆

When, after a stint in the British Army which left him crippled for life, Auberon Waugh went up to Oxford in 1959, by his own admission he knew nothing of the place apart from what he had read in his father's novel, *Brideshead Revisited*, describing the Oxford of 35 years earlier—and in *Sinister Street*, portraying Oxford 25 years before that, and *Zuleika Dobson*, ten years earlier still. He was appalled, he recalls, "by how few

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public schoolboys there were, appalled by the number of earnest, working-class youths whose humorless faces betokened young men on the make." It was equally sobering to learn that few of his contemporaries at university "had ever heard of Evelyn Waugh, let alone read *Brideshead*." But of course. The ambitious working-class youths had not yet taken to television in those days, and it was not until John Mortimer's adaptation of the Oxford novel for the screen that Evelyn Waugh became as famous as he is now.

I start on this note because both in real life—that is to say, the cultural life of London during the last 30 years—and in his own autobiography—the off-the-cuff squib under review here—Bron Waugh is shadowed, if not always overshadowed, by his electronically enlarged father. This is absurd, but it often happens. During much of his life, Boris Pasternak had to smile pleasantly and endure comparisons with his father, an academic painter, laid on by family well-wishers. I do not want to argue that there is not much in Waugh *père* that is as funny as anything in Jerome K. Jerome, or as precisely observed as anything in Somerset Maugham. I merely wish to point out that without Waugh *fils* and his band of merry men at *Private Eye* and elsewhere, London as I have known it would not have existed. It may not exist much longer anyway, but at least an honest review may repay an aesthetic debt for one writer's attempts at keeping alive what is truly worthy of preservation.

Better than any novel by anybody's father, Waugh's journalism prepares us for life in the continuous present of a civilization on its last legs. This treasure is collected in the two volumes of his magazine or newspaper diaries, *Four Crowded Years* (1976) and *A Turbulent Decade* (1985), and two additional volumes of newspaper column-type essays, *In the Lion's Den* (1978) and *Another Voice* (1986). The last time I looked, "Another Voice" was still running in the *Spectator*, while the *Telegraph* was continuing to pay Waugh to vent his emerald spleen alongside my friend Michael Wharton in "Way of the World." The diary genre, as adapted to journalism, is long lost in the United States, and it is now next to impossible to describe to an American audience the hideous excitement of opening a mainstream broadsheet to check whom or what Bron Waugh is skewering this morning. "My own small gift," he notes here, is "for making the comment, at any given time, which people least wish to hear."

When Conrad Black bought the *Telegraph*, where Waugh's column had been appearing since 1981, he appointed Peregrine Worsthorne as the editor. At one point in this memoir we learn, apparently apropos of nothing whatsoever, that "Claudie Worsthorne, wife of the great Conservative thinker" once told Waugh that "her husband wore a hairnet to bed." But when we later read that, on Worsthorne's elevation, "things did not go quite so smoothly" with the *Sunday Telegraph* column, the frivolous intelli-

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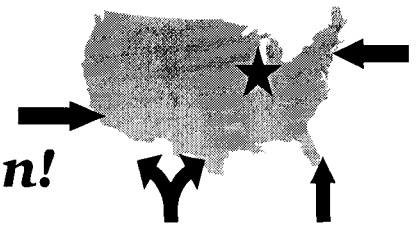

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gence picked up along the way comes in handy.

> Perry is not, of course, a vain man, but I had the impression that he rather resented the expression of opinions other than his own on the page which now belonged to him. His first action on becoming editor was to announce that he was moving the column off the leader page. I resigned. Perry would probably not have minded in the least to lose me, but other counsels prevailed. . . . What in fact had happened was that his dear wife, Claudie, had told him that if he lost my column, she was going to cancel the *Sunday Telegraph*.

Bear in mind that Perry Worsthorne is by no means one of the villains of the decade. In fact, he is a kind and in many ways gifted man, with the shortcomings and weaknesses—apart from his colossal vanity—of just about anybody else in highbrow journalism. But to be Bron, the "vituperative artist" of his own definition, is to have no easy friends and no corporate loyalties, to accept the face of no man unless, perhaps, he likes the look of his wife. As is the case, for instance, with the late Charles Douglas-Home—undoubtedly the last great editor of the *Times*—to whom he had taken a rather groundless dislike which he later hoped would be mitigated by his fulsome praise of Jessica.

With the feigned naivete that is another trademark of Waugh's journalism, this book is divided into two sections, some 200 pages for "Youth" and a mere 80 pages for "Maturity." It does not surprise me in the least that the first section, more classically "autobiographical" in that it covers Waugh's relationship with his father and the many branches of a becomingly complex family tree, is actually quite dull. This is because, deep down, Waugh does not fully appreciate his own uniqueness and cannot entirely accept his role in the modern world as the great progenitor he is, rather than a mere descendant of a world that is no more. Bron Waugh modest?! In this sense he is excruciatingly so, to the detriment of his writing. He simply cannot write—not with a straight face, at any rate—in a genre that he has not himself at least in part invented. Perhaps for this very reason, though it may also be just so much perverse coquetry, he is very firm about dissuading us from reading any of his five published novels.

The second, ridiculously brief, section where he finally comes into his own as England's favorite venomous viper is itself worth the price of the book. Here, for instance, is how Waugh describes the birth of a great British institution, the "Diary" in *Private Eye*:

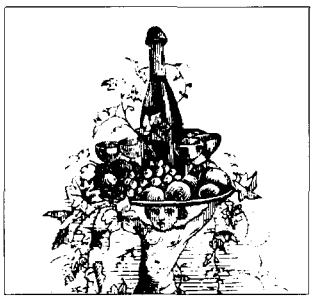
> The essence of the 'Diary', as it emerged, was that it was a work of pure fantasy, except the characters in it were real. If ever some president or head of state paid an official visit, I was there to greet him. If ever the Queen gave a ball or luncheon party, I was there to dance with her or help her survive the terrible bores who had in fact been invited—their names were often available in the court circular or gossip columns. The technique, whenever possible, was to find someone who had been present and could give an amusing account of what had happened, and then stretch and distort it, inserting myself in whichever role seemed appropriate—the sexual opportunist, the millionaire patron of the arts and learning, the M.I.5 or CIA agent, the drunk, the Thomist theologian, the confidential adviser to princes and presidents. It worked very well indeed, and I began to think I might have created a new art form.

Notice the meek "might" in the last sentence. I swear, to his dying day Bron Waugh will continue believing that his father's novels are the loftier achievement. I leave the reader with a similar thought from the author, one of the few occasions in this book when his tone turns overtly philosophical:

> It was many years before I could break the habit of viewing every event with half an eye to the bulletin I would send to my father. Even now, I find that when I hear a funny story about someone in whom he would have been interested—the child of a friend, perhaps, or some grandee—I mentally store it away to repeat to him. There always follows a pang of bereavement when I remember that he is no longer around to hear it. But the strain of living two lives, one on my own, and the other through his eyes, was greatly relieved by his sudden death. Perhaps nobody is completely grown up until both his parents are dead.

Andrei Navrozov, formerly Chronicles' *poetry editor and London correspondent, is now* Chronicles' *European correspondent.*

LIBERAL ARTS



VICTIMHOOD

"'Look,' I countered, 'chardonnay is a victim. A few moms and dads get to moping about how chard is fat and passé and all of the sudden it's squaresville. We oughta get down on our knees every day and thank the wine gods that we're living in the 'Time of the Golden Chardonnay.' "

—*from* Wine X Magazine

Beyond the Crossing

by William Mills

Cities of the Plain
by Cormac McCarthy
New York: Knopf;
293 pp., $25.00

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In *Cities of the Plain*, the final volume of McCarthy's *The Border Trilogy*, John Grady Cole, principal character of *All the Pretty Horses*, joins Billy Parham of *The Crossing* in the West Texas-Juárez

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border world, both men a few years older but still managing to get into trouble. As in the earlier works, the reader is turned every which way but loose by the emotional power of the fiction; also, as before, the English language is torqued and pressured to yield new veins of gold. I suspect McCarthy is the best novelist we have in the country now, perhaps even the best writing in the English language at the present moment.

The laconic humor, present almost on every page, only serves to sharpen the outlines of this dark story. The verbal horsing around, the cowboy give-and-take of the dialogue, is an important element in the narrative drive of the novel, whose plot centers on John Grady's overwhelming passion for a teenage epileptic Mexican whore kept virtually a captive by Eduardo, the whoremaster who is also in some way a philosopher and a seer. Complicating the plot, Eduardo too is in love with the epileptic whore, although he has strange ways of expressing his affection. As always, McCarthy is on the side of a passionately lived life, his characters bearing no resemblance to those of, say, a Huxley novel: so far as intensity is concerned, they would fit comfortably in an ancient Greek tragedy. As the narrator says of John Grady in *All the Pretty Horses*, "All his reverence and all his fondness and all the leanings of his life were for the ardent hearted and they would always be so and never be otherwise."

McCarthy adheres to the current formula according to which "Billy said" or "John Grady said" is thought to be superfluous—a technique that, given the amount of dialogue in the book, puts the reader quite frequently to the trouble of having to puzzle out who is speaking, without serving any visible artistic purpose. As for the ubiquitous Spanish in the text, though I can read it (most of it) McCarthy's heavy use of a foreign language reminds me of the Russian joke: "Have you read *War and Peace*?" "No, I don't read French." Same problem. One can argue hard for the artistic necessity of the Spanish; somehow, for instance, John Grady or the Mexican whore walking down "Calle de Noche Triste," or having her work in a whorehouse called "La Esperanza del Mundo" makes for a stronger ironic impact. For the average reader, however, the Spanish may present a problem. But then this is no average novel. When a novelist writes like an angel, as this one does, you find you can forgive him many things.

The trilogy as a whole is a story of passage, of initiation. Billy Parham, 28 years old at the beginning of *Cities of the Plain*, is 78 in the epilogue (a real *tour de force*) and still crossing into new worlds, propelled by his "ardent heart." The trilogy is also a theodicy, God being very much on the minds of most of the characters. As is appropriate to a novel of passage, this one contains sages, teachers, and shamans—often in the form of the most unlikely people—who help the initiate to interpret his experience if he is ready to understand it, or help him to frame his questions concerning the nature of reality. A little shoeshine boy in Juárez tells John Grady that "If there's something I want to be a different way from what it is then that's how I say it is. What's wrong with that?"—a question worthy of our latter-day hermenauts and deconstructionists.

In bargaining with Eduardo, Billy Parham is offered another perspective on reality. "Men have in their minds a picture of how the world will be," Eduardo tells him. "How they will be in that world. The world may be many different ways for them but there is one world that will never be and that is the world they dream of. Do you believe that?" Old man Johnson, when asked by John Grady for advice, replies, "I think you ought to follow your heart. That's all I ever thought about anything." And the blind musician, speaking also to John Grady on the subject of destiny, tells him,

> Each act in this world from which there can be no turning back has before it another, and it another yet. In a vast and endless net. Men imagine that the choices before them are theirs to make. But we are free to act only upon what is given. Choice is lost in the maze of generations and each act in that maze is itself an enslavement for it voids every alternative and binds one ever more tightly into the constraints that make a life.

The epilogue finds Billy Parham, 78 years old and down on his luck, sleeping on the ground under a concrete overpass. The year is either 2001 or 2002, depending on whether one counts 2000 as the first year of the new millennium. If the former, the scene resonates with *2001: A Space Odyssey*, McCarthy's trilogy being surely an odyssey in its own right. In the epilogue we find the most sustained ruminations on dream and reality, on destiny and history. The seer-shaman tells Billy about a dream he has had, which in turn is filled with a shaman, magic rituals, masks, and a place of ritual sacrifice. There are resonances with many ancient stories here, including the Arthurian legends, the Grail and Gawain. As with many of the old stories, there is an overpowering sense of fatedness, and of impotence. I leave to the reader the pleasure of meditating on the epilogue, as well as the novel that goes before.

Buy the book and enjoy it now as a virgin experience before Disney makes a movie of it, or the literary theorists tell you what they think it means.

William Mills, a novelist and poet, is the editor of Images of Kansas City. *His latest work of fiction is* Properties of Blood.

Poetry Now

by George Garrett

A Way of Happening: Observations of Contemporary Poetry
by Fred Chappell
New York: Picador USA; 322 pp., $24.00

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Fred Chappell's *A Way of Happening* is a gathering of some 17 critical pieces, together with an important personal essay about teaching writing ("First Night Come Round Again") and an essay-length introduction ("Thanks But No Thanks"), published between 1985 and 1997, all but three written expressly for and published by the *Georgia Review*. Chappell, author of seven novels, two collections of short stories, 13 books of poems, and a book of essays, *Plow Naked* (not to mention his translations from classical drama and French Renaissance poetry), has earned a considerable and enviable reputation and, as well, has received significant awards including the Bollingen Prize in Poetry, the Ingersoll Foundation's T.S. Eliot Award, and the Aiken/Taylor Award from the University

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of the South. For more than 20 years, he has been writing book reviews and literary criticism of all kinds for a variety of newspapers, journals, and literary magazines. This new collection, focused strictly on contemporary poetry and consisting primarily of a sequence of chronicle reviews of more than 80 books, should justly call attention to Chappell's achievements as critic, one whom we most urgently need and ought to cherish.

Truth is, the reviewing and criticism of contemporary poetry is in a sorry state. There are some notable exceptions—one thinks at once of Henry Taylor, Richard Tillinghast, Ted Kooser, Brendan Galvin, Neal Bowers, R.S. Gwynn, and Anthony Hecht, for example; poets themselves, of obvious integrity and sound judgment—but most of our reviewers and critics seem to be deeply and sincerely self-serving, eager players in a game dedicated chiefly to the care and maintenance of a particular, peculiar literary establishment, one they had much to do with creating in the first place and obviously have a vested interest in preserving at all costs. One result of their stance is that the establishment stars and celebrities, though deemed worthy of intensive criticism, are not, in fact, regularly subjected to the commonplace rigors of being widely reviewed. They don't need to be reviewed to be known and celebrated, to maintain place and status in the literary hierarchy. Most of our celebrity poets are institutional (corporate) creatures, working for colleges and universities: happy institutional campers, by and large. When—as here and now—image is almost everything and "reality" knocks only at the back door, what is poetry and how does it come into our lives? The celebrity writer is, on the one hand, strongly advised and sorely tempted to create a kind of brand name (voice) and, if it works well, to repeat it endlessly, mindlessly. Moreover, "successful" poets will not, as a rule, risk the capital of their modest celebrity by frequent tests and trials in the public arena. Another result, dependent on the above, is that new poets—as well as, of course, poets who are not, for one reason or another, members in good standing of the official establishment—are rarely reviewed at all. Thus the establishment remains largely unquestioned and unchallenged.

And then along comes Fred Chappell, fully aware of the limits of all literary criticism to do good or ill, as he wittily tells us in "Thanks But No Thanks" and in the brief, brilliant "Afterword" where he says that "my purposes in criticism have been to laud the ways I found beautiful and truthful and to censure, as gently as conscience allowed, the ways I found faulty and unfaithful." (How many poets have lately invoked beauty and truth as criteria of excellence? How many have mentioned conscience?) Chappell does not need to assert, since he demonstrates and dramatizes these virtues in each of the essays, his sanity and decency, his hard-nosed humility, or a level of constant integrity rare enough to be breathtaking. *A Way of Happening* becomes what it is meant to be—a model for all of us.

To begin with, there is no separation of the well-known and little-known poets and their work, no segregation of sheep and goats. Poets like Alfred Corn, A.R. Ammons, Elizabeth Spires, Raymond Carver, Norman Dubie, William Matthews, Eleanor Ross Taylor, James Tate, Reed Whittemore, William Jay Smith, W.D. Snodgrass, T.R. Hummer, Carolyn Forche, and James Applewhite share space and equal, fair-minded attention with many others whose names and work are not so public. Chappell has long had a reputation for flinty integrity, extraordinary fair-mindedness. He will cheerfully (and fairly) kick ass when that is in order. Here he is on the honored and prize-winning efforts of James Tate: "Tate can write this stuff by the yard, and after one reads twenty or so yards, it all begins to sound the same, like the chaff of AM radio playing somewhere in the neighborhood" ("Every Poet in His Humor"). Or, in the same essay, a tough look at the art of Reed Whittemore: "Unfortunately, the book is more attractive as a physical object than as poetry. Almost all the poems here are intended as humorous, but few of them are because an apparent laziness in Whittemore's thought and expression invites sloppy banality." Friend or foe, no matter: all are equal. James Applewhite, for example, is a lifelong friend of Chappell, and Chappell has written and here writes admiringly of his work. Yet he is unwilling to suspend the critical enterprise: "For all his determination to confront the new, Applewhite still subscribes to the Agrarian fairy tale about antebellum culture. It forms the ground of his critical stance when he looks at the South about him now" ("An Idiom of Uncertainty: Southern Poetry Now"). Praise and criticism go hand in hand. And Chappell is secure enough in his demonstrable honesty to be fearless in his instruction: "I would be joyous to think I am wrong in my surmise, but I can't help gaining the impression that contemporary black poetry as represented in the *Fast Talk* collection doesn't really desire to communicate broadly, that it takes pleasure in ethnic exclusivity." What other matador would wave his cape before the multicultural bull?

It is more than worth the price of admission to come upon some of Chappell's discoveries. For example, he is not the first critic, by any means, to encounter and honor the work of Brendan Galvin; but his laudatory critique of the book-length *Saints in Their Ox-Hide Boat* ("Once Upon a Time: Narrative Poetry Returns?") is a genuine contribution to a particular problem for contemporary poetry: "If Alan Shapiro is accurate in predicting a return of narrative poetry, I would point to *Saints in Their Ox-Hide Boat* as the kind of narrative I would like to see produced."

In short, then, this remarkable book of criticism has a number of distinct values. Yes, it is a model of good criticism, good sense, and good writing when we need these most. And, like the best criticism, it points and leads the reader directly to the books and themes discussed. And it is an exemplary reminder— here taken for granted by Chappell—that poetry matters, even now; that we need to be aware of it as best we can, in all of its successes and excesses.

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Letter From London

by Andrei Navrozov

The Skinny on the Pulps

◆

In the days before my life became a perpetual holiday, there was always the pair of inquisitive Italians across the table who wanted to know why I had chosen to live in London. They saw I was a writer, and an unambitious one at that; why not live in Italy? They saw I liked eating; *allora*, why England?

I would invariably reply that British publishing is like Italian food, with large morning newspapers and interesting small-circulation weeklies playing the part of fresh ingredients. *Private Eye*, I would say, is our buffalo mozzarella. The *Times* is our *De Cecco*, our daily dread, our *pastasciutta*. All sentimental at the mention of foodstuffs, they nodded encouragement. That was the moment to fix them with my most solemn stare and to argue that newspapers create the necessary conditions for writing by marking out the cultural median above which the actual cooking, as it were, takes place. Everything else is just kitchen machinery, sieves, and graters.

I am still proud of the analogy, for the reason alluded to in one of my earlier communications from Rome. Italian food is palpable proof and variegated illustration of the notion that it is supply (which is another word for God and may assume the form of tradition, talent, or the weather), not demand (which usually assumes the form of money), that makes a thing good. The world's better mousetraps are invented by capricious eccentrics who care little for their bank accounts and nothing for the peace of their neighbors' larders. The ghosts of her mother and grandmother, not the wild catcalls of a foreigner's taste buds, are on the mind of our Porto Ercole cook when she is in the kitchen. Ten years ago in London, in a memorable taunt of the devil that is demand, Auberon Waugh's *Literary Review* promoted a writer called David Sexton because this way they would always have the word SEX on the cover.

These days, in Italy as much as in America, no sooner do I mention British publishing than the conversation turns to Rupert Murdoch, rather the way just about anything British a couple of years ago meant the Princess of Wales. Yet the fact is that here in Britain Mr. Murdoch owns just one large book publishing concern and only one serious daily newspaper, the *Times*, together with its Sunday sister, the *Sunday Times*. This, naturally, is quite apart from the vast variety of patently unserious—that is to say, pulp—print and television holdings which he has amassed, here and the world over. And it is these very interests that are at the heart of the whole tragic misunderstanding I want to describe.

I just spent three weeks in London, where, on the Wednesday between the opening day of Ascot (your correspondent lost £60 without once leaving White's) and Ladies' Day (your correspondent made £130 betting from the Aspinalls marquee), I finally had the leisure to acquaint myself with the latest newspaper circulation figures. The dynamics have indeed changed. The chief underlying concern of all journalistic activity is no longer who can write what for whom, but whether Mr. Murdoch of News International or Mr. Conrad Black of the Telegraph Group is top dog and hence the more beauteous animal to suck up to. Apparently it is Mr. Black, because, outside the Murdoch papers, nearly every article about publishing is interrupted to abuse the monopolizing villain and to decry his works.

The inscrutable facts are these. The *Daily Telegraph*'s circulation has fallen by almost five percent since May 1997 to a total of 1,070,313 and keeps falling. The *Times*, which gained more than five percent over the same period, has been losing readers for four months running and now has 753,043, down from the all-time high of 861,931 in November 1996. True, the gap between the two widened by 9,000 readers during the month of May, despite the continuing price war which Mr. Murdoch started some five years ago and which has so far cost him upwards of $150 million. But, as Robert Maxwell used to say, we'll see whose pocket is deeper, which brings us back to the pulp interests which are the source of Mr. Murdoch's wealth rather the way they were the late Mr. Maxwell's.

The truth is that, however numerous or lucrative, such interests can't actually play a significant role in the discussion of British publishing, its tragedy and its likely final, American-style demise. It is quite self-evident that blatant, shameless pulp has existed always, has always been successful, and has often enjoyed a clear commercial advantage over the less frivolous and more rarified subject matter. To rail at Mr. Murdoch for being among our epoch's purveyors of pulp may be a good thing, a moral thing, even a Christian thing; or else it may be a hypocritical thing, a puritanical thing, even a selfish thing; as with much else in our sad sublunar world, it rather depends on the provenance of the criticism. One thing railing at Mr. Murdoch is not, however, is relevant.

What is relevant is the role in all this of the editor, the journalist, the writer. When I first came to London, one summer afternoon in 1985, I took a taxi from the airport to the offices of *a* magazine and asked to see *an* editor. He came out, spoke with me for five minutes, and gave me work. Nonetheless, if I could be called a prospector, this could not have been called a lucky strike, because what lay all about me in the London of 15 years ago was a writer's Klondike, a diverse and competitive environment where the gold of publication lay above ground. The man was one of many, indeed one of a hundred or even a thousand others like him.

It may well be that somewhere in the depths of the *New York Times* today there lurks a kindly gentleman, not unlike Maxwell Perkins the All-American, who does what he can to foster whatever talent comes his way, protecting it from the harsh conformist winds that howl in Times Square and make grown men shiver from Los Angeles to Hong Kong. But against the background of a national monopoly—which, unlike Mr. Murdoch's News International, the New York Times Company is and has been since the demise of its nearest competitor some 30 years ago—the role of such a figure is morally ambiguous, smacking of provocation and entrapment, while its beneficial effect on the literary life of the nation can only be negligible.

"In a field of battle," goes a Russian proverb, "one man is no warrior." Today as yesterday, if the Maxwell Perkins of

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song and legend is all alone, he is at best a powerless eccentric and at worst an unwitting *agent provocateur*; but if, like the Englishman I met that afternoon in London, he is one of many, he is a vital sign of his culture and a microcosm of what it offers the newcomer. My point is that the misconceived, ultimately self-destructive war for higher readership numbers among Britain's newspapers is upending the autonomous nooks and crannies which those who used to make the difference in literary London inhabit in their hundreds.

What, until a few years ago, was a complex, polygonal, internally contradictory, and feudal system of editorial relationships among and within the main quality broadsheets now resembles a struggle for total dominance between the "empires" (meaning, in stark contrast to the KGB, the Internal Revenue Service, or the New York Times Company, nothing more menacing than "newspapers") of Messrs. Murdoch and Black, with the dying *Independent* as everybody's punching-bag and the fantastically successful, center-left *Guardian* magisterially above the fray. In this, I sincerely believe, the *Guardian* is now presaging its own future role as the lone survivor of the war, and hence Britain's future *New York Times*, because in matters of intellectual monopolizing (a lesson apparently lost on Messrs. Murdoch and Black) victory is not to the swift nor to the widely read but to those who bide their time and never put the Spice Girls on the front page.

Mr. Murdoch will lose in the end, and so will Mr. Black. Insofar as they continue to ignore the fundamental truth that editors, journalists, and writers—not discounts and coupons—are what sells, neither deserves to own a serious newspaper. The struggle for "readers" in which they are engaged to the death is so much shadow-boxing, because frivolous and stupid people (who, from the advertisers' point of view, are also poor) would always rather spend their time watching Christians being fed to the lions than reading *Quo Vadis*, not to say Gibbon. Those who pander to their vulgar desires may succeed financially, as Mr. Murdoch has succeeded where overt and utter pulp is concerned. But to have major influence is clearly an altogether different objective, one unattainable by purely commercial means. Despite this, both Mr. Murdoch and Mr. Black have been seeking to attain it by purely commercial means for their respective flagships since their war began.

Meanwhile, as a direct result of the war, the cultural landscape has already been dulled almost beyond recognition. The editor, the journalist, and the writer are the obvious losers. That the ignorant architects of their misfortune will be the losers in the long term is small consolation to anybody. As for me, I seem to have nothing with which to compare British publishing any longer when the Italians across the table ask why I chose to settle in England. What would you suggest I say, for crying out loud? Spaghetti-O's?

Andrei Navrozov, formerly Chronicles' *poetry editor and London correspondent, is now* Chronicles' *European correspondent.*

Letter From Inner Israel

by Jacob Neusner

The Politics of Reform

◆

The Day of Atonement by its very advent at sunset on the eve of the tenth of the lunar month of Tishré atones for sin and involves repentance—regret for sin, resolution not to repeat it—prayer, and fasting. Not the rites of the day, the prayers of the day, and not the act of refraining from food, drink, and sex, but the advent of the day itself bears that remarkable power. Jews who otherwise do not practice the rites of Judaism observe the prohibitions of the day and find their way to the synagogue.

The advent of the holy day, this year on September 30th, called to mind the practice of many synagogues of giving seats beside the holy ark, where the Torahs are guarded, to persons whom the synagogue community wishes not only to honor but to set as living icons, as models of virtue, before the sight of the assembled faithful.

No one familiar with the aesthetic glories of Orthodox Christianity will take offense at the resort to living icons. But then, the repertoire of candidates will convey a signal too. Last year a Reform synagogue in New York City, Central Synagogue, announced on Yom Kippur that it was planning a special Shabbat service in honor of Marion Wright Edelman and the Children's Defense Fund. In response to that choice, a congregant—a longtime friend of mine—framed better than I have seen anywhere else the objections to the left-wing political Judaism that Reform synagogues promote, meaning the invocation of religion in the service of bitter partisan causes of the far reaches of otherwise atheist socialism. He sent to Rabbi Peter Rubinstein, the Central Synagogue's spiritual leader, a whole catalogue of objections:

> The Children's Defense Fund is a deeply political organization, which is a constant advocate for increased government programs, programs that are oftentimes miserable failures. [These include:]
>
> Vaccines for Children and Clinton-Care: The Children's Defense Fund was one of the earliest proponents of the flawed and failed Vaccines for Children program in 1993. The Balanced Budget Amendment: The Children's Defense Fund was a major opponent of the Balanced Budget Amendment in 1996. . . . Leaving our kids to pay our debts in the name of children is a dubious proposition. Welfare Reform: Marion Wright Edelman has been a staunch opponent of any effort to reform welfare.
>
> In these and in other positions Marion Wright Edelman has sought to assume the moral high ground by self-righteously speaking in the name of children to constantly promote and defend government programs . . . by using children as the battering ram of the welfare state, her appeal is based . . . on the confusion of intentions with consequences.
>
> Would that this were an isolated incident. Unfortunately, it is part of a disturbing pattern at Central Synagogue and much of institutional leadership of the Reform movement, which, in the name of "social justice," slides into the pocket of the liberal-left and an intensely political ethos. Usually the political tendencies of the Reform movement are left to referenda at

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the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, and the synagogue is reserved for the Torah. Are you now saying that the Children's Defense Fund and its policies are our Torah?

In reply, the rabbi invited the congregant to his office for Torah lessons, which would explain why Mrs. Edelman indeed was the right choice for Reform icon of the year.

At issue once more is the politicization of Judaism by the left. Having lost control of the institutions of politics, discredited in the polls, the left turns to religion, hoping to win by manipulating morality what it cannot gain by persuasion. And the other-than-Orthodox Judaisms—Reform, Reconstructionist, and Conservative—present prime targets. A few anecdotes tell the tale.

When I met a fine Reform rabbi in Boca Raton, the first thing he asked me was, "Are you really a Republican, as people say?" I said, "I don't know if I make it, but I've been voting mostly for Republicans for 30 years, so I suppose that should count, and I still blame myself for picking Lyndon Johnson in 1964!" He: "But why? I never met anyone of that persuasion before."

A 14-year-old boy complained to his father about Sunday school: "All they ever talk about in ethics class is homosexuality." The assistant rabbi in that temple is avowedly homosexual. Seeing him leave a small robing room, the same boy remarked to his teacher in all innocence, "Oh, I see Rabbi X, coming out of the closet." For that he was reprimanded.

What is wrong hardly demands exposition. The real question is, why has a religious movement of reform adopted a new orthodoxy? When "reform" was a verb, the norm was the Torah as received from Sinai, the medium of reform was scholarship, mostly historical, and it sought to identify what was, and is, authentic to Sinai and what was a later accretion. So Reform Judaism (and its companions, Reconstructionist and Conservative Judaisms) joined issue with Orthodoxy on matters of Torah revelation. Then a fixed star guided the process of reform, yielding a Reform Judaism of integrity and stability.

But over time, the process replaced the result, and the sensation of the month overtook theological and legal discourse. Like the politics of Washington—with their infernal power to "enlighten" conservatives beyond all recognition, so that, in "maturing," the representatives of the right find reason and make left turns—so the politics of theology take their course. Reform leads not to purification, recovery of the essentials of the faith—as the Catholic Reformation would have had it—but to the fissiparous dissolution of everything into nothing. And, moorings cut, the faith can only drift wherever the currents of the moment carry it. There is no rudder left.

But what weakens Reform Judaism carries the possibility of renewal as well, the return of that Judaism and its companions to a dialogue with the Torah viewed as the norm and the source of discipline. Since Reform goes with the flow, the movement of the general culture toward a renewed engagement with the revealed will of God—Christianity toward Scripture, for example—may carry that Judaism in an unanticipated direction. When the general culture turns conservative, as it has, Reform in due course is going to respond. So from the current flavor of the month—say, homosexual rights—Reform will pass on to the next flavor, which, for all we know, may be the affirmation of life even for the unborn. But don't hold your breath.

Still, reform feeds on change. It is its only constant. After all, for the first century and a half of Reform Judaism, Zionism was anathema, the Jews being viewed solely as a religious community in the model of German Protestant Christianity. But in the past 50 years, Reform has made itself a bastion of Zionism, and found in the state of Israel a principal component of its formulation of Judaic identity.

Who knows—maybe the day will come when, in the aptly named Central Synagogue of New York City, the successor to Marion Wright Edelman will be the heroic William F. Buckley, Jr. But don't hold your breath.

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The Bend in the River, The Arm of the Cliff

by Charles Edward Eaton

I almost diagnosed myself: emotional wreck—
Thoughts that were not so, feelings that were not true—
Until I saw a swan that wore a black stocking on his neck.

I thought I knew everything there was to know of swans—
If I had been the visual, plastic artist I am not
I could have done them up for you in wood or paint or bronze.

Taking them out of context, the river or the lake,
Pure white, of course, all black, some orange-beaked,
I would give them to you in a chosen medium without mistake.

I could fashion any swan I liked, and mark it: Sold.
The rivers, gardens, yes, the cliffs belonged to me:
I had the edges of imagination well-patrolled.

All in a fantasy, of course, until the day that things went stiff,
Too loose as well, too gone astray, and lacking in decision—
Gardens in turmoil, white water on the river, a figure jumping from a cliff.

And then I saw something I had not seen before,
A black-necked swan. It took the turbulence in hand, brought the jumper to a halt—
Everything you think you know or fear has another door.

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CRIME

The Zebra Killings

by James P. Lubinskas

As President Clinton's Dialogue on Race draws to a close, his panel will be offering a final report on how to remedy the evils of racism in America. Given the members of the hand-picked panel, it can be said with certainty that the racism to be remedied will be white racism and only white racism. But while this modern day Kerner Commission is working on its report, a California group is trying to focus attention on one of the most troubling episodes of racial murder in the nation's history.

The San Jose-based European American Issues Forum (E/AIF) is going to hold a memorial ceremony on October 20 to mark the 25th anniversary of the Zebra killings—one of America's worst cases of serial murder. These racially motivated hate crimes occurred between 1972 and 1974 and left 71 people dead. They were dubbed the Zebra killings because of the radio channel used by the police investigating the case (channel Z). But the name would later take on a more sinister meaning as it became apparent that a group of blacks was systematically killing whites merely because they were white.

It was not until the attacks became centralized in San Francisco starting in October 1973 that police knew they had a case of serial killings on their hands. While all serial murders are disturbing and the work of psychopathic minds, authorities were doubly disturbed by the nature of these attacks. Not only were they racially motivated, but the victims tended to be women and slight or elderly men who could not fight back.

The victims were not chosen by chance. The killers were part of an organization called "The Death Angels," a group within the Nation of Islam which believed the standard NOI line about whites: that whites were the evil, inferior creation of Yacub, the mad black scientist who wanted a race of inferiors to rule over. The Death Angels took this logic a step further in believing they could earn "points" towards becoming an angel when they died if they killed whites—especially women and children.

The first San Francisco killing occurred on October 20, 1973. Richard and Quita Hague were a young couple out for an after dinner walk when they were abducted at gunpoint and forced into a van. They were bound, and Richard was hit several times with a lug wrench and knocked unconscious. Quita was sexually molested and hacked with a machete. While begging for her life, she was decapitated. Before leaving, the attackers hacked at the face of the still unconscious man. Miraculously, he survived and was able to give information to the police.

The brutal attack on the Hagues marked the beginning of 179 days of terror in San Francisco that would result in 23 victims, 15 of them murdered; some of the others were left paralyzed or with permanent nerve damage. One of the survivors is Art Agnos, who would go on to become (an extremely liberal) mayor of San Francisco.

The Agnos shooting illustrates that the attacks were in no way a political protest of "oppression." A member of the California Commission on Aging, Agnos was attending a meeting in a black neighborhood to discuss building a government health clinic in the area. In the same neighborhood, some of the killers were "hunting" for whites. As the meeting was letting out, Agnos stopped to talk with two women. One of the killers came up behind him and shot him twice in the back. The bullets ripped apart his lungs, spleen, and kidneys. Luckily, bystanders called an ambulance and Agnos barely survived.

Zebra (1980) by crime writer Clark Howard, remains the definitive book on the killings. Using court records, police reports, witnesses, and interviews with the killers themselves, Howard was able to piece together the horrid details of the murder and the unrelenting hatred that inspired the killers.

Brutality and a lack of remorse on the part of the criminals mark the attacks. They were not murdering human beings but "grafted snakes," "blue-eyed devils" and "white motherf-----s." More often than not, they chose the weak and defenseless to kill. Vincent Wollin was shot in the back and killed on his 69th birthday. Mildred Hosler, an obese older woman, was shot while walking to a bus stop after frantically trying to get away from her younger, faster attacker. Ilario Bertuccio—a 135 pound, 81-year-old man—was killed while walking home from work. Marietta DiGirolamo, a 5'1" white woman with a black boyfriend, was shot and killed on her way to a nearby bar. In none of these cases did the victims do anything to provoke the murderers. They just had white skin and were in the wrong place at the wrong time.

As the murders added up, the San Francisco police came under pressure to solve and stop the crimes. In what was known as Operation Zebra, more police were put on the street and security checks were beefed up. E/AIF President Louis Calabro was a street patrol sergeant on the San Francisco Police Department at the time and was a part of Operation Zebra. He describes the mood of the police force during the attacks:

> I think what most cops were thinking was how the hell are we going to end it. It kept happening while we were on full alert. They would hit and run and make their escape before it could be reported. There were rumors about . . . a department cop who was a member of the Officers for Justice, a black police officers association primarily formed to get more promotional jobs for themselves. We were all appalled and disgusted with the viciousness and randomness of the attacks—old people . . . stark terror at not being able to stop it.

The increased police presence had the predictable effect of enraging the black community. In what was perhaps a precursor to the Los Angeles riots and the O.J. Simpson trial, blacks in San Francisco showed a troubling lack of remorse at the murders of their white

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neighbors. Howard quotes from man-on-the-street interviews conducted by the *San Francisco Examiner* in 1974. Among the responses by blacks were: "I don't feel comfortable with all the police around. But then, I never have felt safe around them." A young housewife stated, "I'm really glad that the police are concerned for a change. I just wonder if they'd be as much concerned if it were black people getting killed." A black attorney added, "I commend the police for their beefing up of the force, but I hope it's not just directed at blacks. I hope blacks aren't being harassed."

Still other blacks blamed "unemployment" and "oppression" for the attacks. One man said, "The madness that drives black men to kill innocent people . . . involves a sickness that is as American as apple pie." Black Panther leader Bobby Seale declared, "every black man in the Bay area is in danger of losing his life." The Reverend Cecil Williams claimed the entire black community was "under a police state that could erupt into a racial war."

It is disturbing that at a time when whites were being randomly killed because of their race, black citizens of San Francisco were venting their anger about possible police harassment and perceived double-standards. Howard observes, "Although they were responding only to a question about Operation Zebra, it was curious that none of the blacks interviewed took the occasion to condemn the unknown street killers or expressed sympathy for the victims."

Detectives Gus Coreris and John Fotinos were both 13-year veterans of the Homicide Unit and led the investigation which eventually cracked the case. Though both suspected the Black Muslims were involved, it was hard to get any information on the possible suspects because of a ban on surveillance of places of worship. Moreover, the strict, closed atmosphere of the NOI made it hard to get spies into the organization or to entice informants with rewards.

Because the attackers were using the same weapons for each victim, Coreris and Fotinos were able to link the murderers. Also, the people who survived, such as Agnos and Richard Hague, were able to give descriptions of the attackers. Finally, one of the Death Angels came forward with information on the other killers. Those arrested were eight black men with prior prison records. All were members of the Death Angels. The core of the group that committed most of the murders consisted of five men: Jesse Lee Cooks, J.C. Simon, Larry Green, Manuel Moore, and Anthony Harris. Ironically, Harris was married to a white woman. Though this group of eight committed most of the killings, they do not account for all the members. Some killers remain free to this day.

The Nation of Islam paid for the legal representation of every one of the accused except for Cooks, who had immediately admitted to his killings. All the Death Angels caught are still in prison, though they do have a chance for parole. The E/AIF and family members of the victims have pledged to attend every parole hearing and to work to make sure the killers spend their lives in prison. On October 20, the same group will install a plaque at the sight where Richard and Quita Hague were abducted 25 years before.

The capture of the Death Angels put San Francisco at ease again, and the last 25 years has seen little to no publicity about the murders. It is interesting that while most serial killings take on a life of their own through movies, books, and documentaries (Jeffrey Dahmer, the Son of Sam, the Zodiac Murders), the Zebra killings have been all but forgotten. Calabro is often told that his remembrance of the murders is "inflammatory" and will create division. Still, he believes the innocent victims of this tragedy must be remembered. He will invite San Francisco Mayor Willie Brown to attend the memorial ceremony but does not expect an answer. The mayor's office was invited to a smaller service last year but did not even bother to send a representative. Calabro, who expects some local media coverage for the event, detects a degree of "political correctness" in regards to the Zebra murders. "The lack of publicity and recognition of this terrible tragedy by government agencies, civil rights groups, and the media is consistent with their overt efforts to portray European-Americans as *the* perpetrators of hate crimes."

Unfortunately, the same type of black-on-white serial murders occurred again. The Miami-based cult of Yahweh-Ben-Yahweh began systematically killing whites in the early 1990's. As in the Zebra killings, whites were portrayed as "devils" to be killed at random. In what was mainly local news, seven people were ritually slaughtered before the cult was stopped.

It is said that those who forget history are doomed to repeat it. The lack of attention given to this crime as it approaches its 25th anniversary does not bode well for the future of racial justice and reconciliation. Though the report of the President's race panel will likely get more attention than the E/AIF memorial service, we would all do well to ponder the words of Clark Howard: "Monstrous behavior has never been restricted by race or religion—and never will be. The recounting of that behavior in books, articles, and films must never be restricted either—not by censor, not by conscience. For only in the telling of it might understanding surface."

James P. Lubinskas is a writer living in Falls Church, Virginia. For more information on the Zebra Killings Memorial, please call Louis Calabro at 650-952-8489.

MEDIA

Hillaryland

by Janet Scott Barlow

A bit of autobiography. I was born and reared in Chicago. I am married to a man of achievement. I have watched my children leave the nest for college. I am highly opinionated and tend to believe that the world would be a better place if more of my fellow citizens agreed with me. I have experienced both joy and sorrow in my life, and not long ago I celebrated my 50th birthday. I list these facts in case *Time* is interested in doing a cover story on me; in case *Newsweek*, *U.S. News*, and the *New York Times* decide to run lengthy features covering my life at midpoint; in case the entire American media establishment would like to use my transition into middle age as a catalyst for its own self-analysis and, ultimately, self-affirmation.

My thumbnail autobiography lists what I have in common with Hillary Clinton, and it was enough to earn *her* an orgy of national attention, right down to a booklet published by the Chicago Chamber of Commerce titled *Hillary: The Early Years*. Of course, she is the First Lady of the United States and I am not. But in a sense, that merely illus-

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trates one more thing we have in common: neither of us has been elected to anything. So what the heck—bring on the *New York Times*.

On second thought, never mind. A closer look at our respective backgrounds reveals at least one important difference between me and Mrs. Clinton: she has a generational identity. My birth year was 1944, meaning that I am technically too old (every cloud) to be a baby boomer (has a silver lining). It's just as well. Seeing as how I am generationally unequipped to believe that everyone is thinking about me and those who aren't should be, I would be unnerved to see my face in *Time*, appalled to hear myself called "our mascot," as boomette writer Margaret Carlson once described Mrs. Clinton, and horrified to know that I was being defended by the likes of Eleanor "The Screecher" Clift. (However, honesty does require me to admit that I would not say no should the Chicago Chamber of Commerce ever desire to publish a booklet called *Janet: The Early Years*.)

The barrage of coverage surrounding Hillary Clinton's birthday was generated largely by her fellow boomers, who dominate the national media. And as usual when boomers converge, everybody had more than one agenda. For Mrs. Clinton it was a new means to an old end—her umpteenth effort at remaking her image, i.e., at gaining enough footing to prove that . . . well, that she's *right*, damnit, right about everything! For media boomers, it was an opportunity for their umpteenth affirmation of Hillary Clinton as a national role model, which she *must* become eventually in order to prove that they, the media, are right, damnit, right about everything! This is the hallmark of baby boomers: even when the conversation is about you, it's about them. (That way, they never run out of something to talk about.) As maddening as this is to normal people, it was finally worth listening to because this time, for the first time, there was a new quality to the conversation—a slight edge of desperation.

In its lengthy, earnest, ponderous birthday tribute to Hillary Clinton, *Time* ran a sidebar in which eight "famous" women revealed how it feels to be 50. Go ahead, guess how it feels. To quote *Time*'s headline, it's "Fabulous . . . *Really*!" According to novelist Isabel Allende, women in their 50's have "wisdom, we have a network, we have a sort of secret strength. . . . We are not so distracted by motherhood, by being attractive, by the sexual energy that was there indiscriminately." Indiscriminately? One understands why Ms. Allende was chosen to support an article about Hillary Clinton: by all appearances, neither woman has ever heard the words, "Speak for yourself, lady."

Time also offered up tennis player Billie Jean King, she, too, full of self-awe. "I think 50 now is what 35 used to be," she said. "It's a great age, the best." (*Of all the wonderful Me's I have ever been, the current Me is the most wonderful!*) I am willing to predict that in 15 years, we will be hearing that 65 is what 50 used to be. And after *that*, when baby boomers start dying off, we will be told that they are dead in a way the world has never seen—more meaningfully dead, more completely dead, stronger and more fully realized in their deadness than any who have gone before. Fabulous . . . *really*!

Just because 50 is fabulous, you should not get the idea that it's easy. In fact, today's female boomers have known trials—glass ceilings, sexist jokes—that would have extinguished lesser spirits. Mrs. Clinton, quoted in *Time*: "Perhaps it would be easier . . . if we could be handed a pattern and cut it out, just as our mothers and grandmothers and foremothers were. But that is not the way it is today."

That particular observation from America's foremost contemporary trailblazer, pioneer, and earth mama raises a question. Has any group of women ever been dumped on, to such a degree and with such self-confident carelessness, as have the mothers of 60's feminists (in public and by their own daughters yet)? I don't know about Hillary Clinton's "foremothers," but mine didn't have "patterns," they had lives—lives so demanding and unpredictable that the first lesson of existence was: you are not the center of the universe. In turn, this perspective gave my foremothers "a sort of secret strength," to use Ms. Allende's phrase, a strength secret enough not to be squandered, but available enough to clean the clock of any little snot—even a middle-aged little snot—who dared to condescend to them in the manner of Hillary Clinton.

Let's get real here. With her dependence on "ferociously protective aides," her reliance on public opinion polls, her existence in a place her friends call "Hillaryland," and her access to like-minded boomer journalists, Hillary Clinton is, to use the Chicago vernacular, a candy-ass when compared to just about anybody's foremothers. Even when viewed in the context of her contemporaries, Mrs. Clinton's existence stands in stark contrast to others', utterly free as it is of the normal demands (which is not to say the feelings) of female life—cooking, cleaning, shopping, driving. I do not begrudge Mrs. Clinton her freedoms (there is nothing inherently character-building in cooking, cleaning, shopping, and driving), but I do believe she should seek the grace to admit that she does not live the life of an Everywoman and never has.

Everything written about Hillary Clinton contradicts some other thing written about her, just as much of what she herself says contradicts many of her prior comments. What this means is that neither she nor her boomer supporters in the press *really* know what they think about anything. They begin and end with the unquestioned assumption that they are worth listening to. As a result, ludicrous statements are made, and idiotic conclusions drawn, based on no evidence whatever. Writer Karen Tumulty in *Time*: "[T]he First Lady will lead a major White House conference on Child Care . . . [and] promised to lay out the problem's complexity with her customary intellectual rigor." As an example of that intellectual rigor, Ms. Tumulty offers this quote from Mrs. Clinton: "You have to put the issue in front of the American people and get them to look at it honestly." The operative words in that statement are *get* and *honestly*. What Hillary Clinton is saying is that, left to their own devices, Americans are either oblivious to important issues or prone to viewing them dishonestly. They must be made to see what is important, then aided in seeing it rightly. Mrs. Clinton's consuming self-righteousness explains the drag on her political learning curve, her intellectual rigor notwithstanding. *U.S. News* reports that "It has taken several years, but she [now] understands that many Americans worry about any powerful White House policy maker who is virtually unaccountable." Slowness on the uptake would appear to be one of the unforeseen pitfalls of living in Hillaryland.

The intense but incoherent attention of baby boomers—through the lens of Hillary Clinton or otherwise—on their arrival at middle age suggests, I believe,

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that they are spooked. And the more spooked they become, the less inclined they are to shut up. Their contradictions, their collective mood swings, their insistent protestations of self-approval, their incessant self-analysis combined with an underdeveloped ability to *process*—all of it indicates a kind of collective befuddlement. It was inevitable. This most self-referential of generations has arrived at midlife with virtually no context in which to appraise their journey. If you have lived only the insular life of the Self (rejecting the example of your foremothers and, presumably, your forefathers also), doubt—a potentially powerful means of growth—will feel like failure, reassessment like hypocrisy. The life of the Self results, with the onset of middle age, in the worst of all worlds: the inability to examine a lengthening past with the clarity necessary to enhance a shortening future. Self-justification is a behavior unto itself, one whose emotional consequence is psychic loneliness. On an intellectual level, the result is merely coarse—sentimentality with no redeeming sweetness.

There is comfort in reaching 50 and knowing that you have been right after all about some important things. But it can be exhilarating—almost liberating—to realize also that you have been wrong. To know that pride or stubbornness or vanity or fear once blinded you to something you now see as true—this is to feel both humbled and emboldened. We may be nothing more than a speck on the great continuum, but we are a part of it nonetheless. To reject that in favor of the dinky insistence that you and your peers are the coolest people ever is, it seems to me, an act of spiritual suicide.

But there is a bright spot on the horizon. It is the Generation X-ers, the twenty-somethings held in such disdain by Children of the 60's for being too cynical, too ironic, and insufficiently idealistic—and we haven't even touched on their disinterest in Changing the World As We Know It. Boomers don't trust X-ers, in other words, because X-ers aren't like boomers. Wary of political nostalgia and put off by middle-aged self-absorption, twenty-somethings are watchful and determinedly cautious. And in their way (they are young, after all), they are rigorously independent-minded—which is another reason boomers are suspicious of them: they are not easily led. This leaves baby boomers with no one to lead but each other—surely not how they imagined spending their prime years. The last thing they ever expected to become was ignorable.

My son exchanges regular letters with his 76-year-old grandmother, wherein they discuss the relative merits of old Artie Shaw recordings. Not long ago, I asked my son what he thought of Bill Clinton. He said, "He's . . . silly, a silly guy." My son is 25 years old, a member of the demographic group that is considered culturally cutting-edge, and he thinks that Grandma's cool but Bill Clinton is embarrassing. If you are a boomer elitist, that's got to hurt. If you are too old to be a boomer and too busy to be an elitist, you might feel inclined to smile. While you're at it, score one for our foremothers.

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FILM

The Hollywood Ten(nessean)

by Bill Kauffman

Fifty years have passed since the orgy of squealing and sanctimony, of perfidy and posturing, that begat the Hollywood blacklist. What a cast of characters paraded before the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC): at this table, communist screenwriters making $2,000 a week scribbling claptrap and convincing themselves that it was revolution; and at that table, stool pigeons betraying their friends, creating on the American right the nauseating figure of the noble Judas, whose name has been Elia Kazan and Whittaker Chambers and Linda Tripp.

None of this would have happened if the film industry had been decentralized; if "local photoplayers in Topeka, or Indianapolis, or Denver" made the movies, as Vachel Lindsay once prophesied. But the coal shortages of the First World War drove movie production to Southern California, and the rest was—alas, for those who love our country—not history.

The HUAC hearings destroyed careers: one highlight of *Tender Comrades*, the new oral history of the Hollywood blacklist by Paul Buhle and Patrick McGilligan, is a lively chat with the feisty Abe Polonsky, writer-director of the commie-*noir* classic *Force Of Evil* (1948). Cinephiles grieve over all those films that Polonsky & Co. never made.

But there are other Hollywood censorship stories that never get told: for instance, the tale of *Tennessee Johnson*. (Not available on video, the movie pops up now and then on the Turner Classic Movies cable network.)

Tennessee Johnson, an MGM biography of President Andrew Johnson, was released in January 1943. Directed by William Dieterle, whose credits include the dreamlike *The Devil and Daniel Webster* (1941), one of the finest movies ever made, *Tennessee Johnson* starred Van Heflin as the cussed tailor of Greeneville and Lionel Barrymore (one of Hollywood's great New Deal-haters) as Thaddeus Stevens, Johnson's radical Republican nemesis. The movie received the sort of respectful notices often given to earnest historical films. *Commonweal* judged it "a sincere visualization of American democracy"; *Time*'s reviewer thought it was "one of Hollywood's grown-up moments." It was also one of Hollywood's most craven moments.

The film originally was titled *The Man On America's Conscience*. The script, by John L. Balderston and Wells Root, took the traditional Claude Bowers view of Reconstruction and Johnson's impeachment: that is, that Johnson "fought the bravest battle for constitutional liberty and for the preservation of our institutions ever waged by an executive" against Pennsylvania congressman Stevens, the brilliant but hateful clubfoot who wished to mistreat the conquered Southerners like a vast peonage. (Stevens, rechristened Austin Stoneman, also played the devil to the archangel Abraham Lincoln in Thomas Dixon, Jr.'s notorious KKK romance *The Clansman*, translated to the screen by D.W. Griffith as *Birth of a Nation*.)

Enter Walter White, secretary of the NAACP. White was annoyed, and understandably so, by Hollywood's depiction of blacks as scraping and bowing simpletons. When he learned that

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MGM was producing an anti-Reconstruction film, White complained to Lowell Mellett, director of the Bureau of Motion Pictures of the Office of War Information. The OWI, a propaganda agency created by one of FDR's executive orders, requested a copy of the screenplay from Louis B. Mayer. Mayer complied, piously assuring Walter White that "I live and breathe the air of freedom and I want it for others as well as myself."

When Mellett and White previewed the unedited film, they hit the roof. Mellett demanded that key scenes be reshot or removed. Thad Stevens, the screenplay's villain, was humanized; one new scene had him kissing and petting Andrew Johnson's grandkids. A scene in which Stevens plied Johnson with drink before his legendarily incoherent vice presidential Inaugural Address was left on the cutting room floor. Rewritten dialogue assured us that Stevens was "sincere" if a mite vengeful. The essential character of Lydia Smith, Stevens' mulatto housekeeper and probable mistress, disappeared. Despite the changes, a gang of Hollywood liberals—Ben Hecht, Zero Mostel, Vincent Price—petitioned the OWI to *destroy* the picture, in best fascist fashion, in the cause of national unity.

Tennessee Johnson—the OWI demanded a conscience-less title—was released in its denatured form. It's a fairly standard biopic: Johnson, nicely played by Heflin, is the runaway tailor's apprentice and self-styled champion of "poor white trash" who is only trying to act upon his predecessor's wise policy of malice toward none and charity toward all. With the exception of Jefferson Davis, secessionists are depicted as huffy churls and hotheads. Lionel Barrymore plays Thad Stevens as though he's rehearsing for the role of Mr. Potter. Growling, snarling, commanding a wheelchair as he would in *It's a Wonderful Life*, he seems to regard Johnson as a mere irritant who exists only to distract him from his real quarry: George Bailey and the Building and Loan.

Nevertheless, *Tennessee Johnson* is far better than a contemporaneous "President movie," *The Remarkable Andrew*, which was written by the soon-to-be-blacklisted Dalton Trumbo. *The Remarkable Andrew* is a witless fantasy in which Andrew Jackson, played as a whiskey-swilling lout by Brian Donlevy, materializes to assist William Holden in rooting out corruption in a Colorado town. The film presents Jackson as the first New Dealer; think of it as a slapstick version of Arthur Schlesinger's *The Age of Jackson*.

One consequence of Walter White's protest was the omission of Lydia Smith, a meaty role for a black actress. The part was recast as the corpulent "laws a mercy!" black maid of stereotype. (There are parallels with today's Hollywood, in which black actors can never play complicated villains, only bland authority figures or the jivey sidekick of the white hero. Will Smith, meet Walter White.) The excision of Lydia Smith not only warred upon truth, it also made Stevens' Negrophilia less comprehensible. Love, after all, is always a higher afflatus than political principle.

Walter White's autobiography makes no mention of his role in altering *Tennessee Johnson*. The title is absent from a shelf full of books on censorship and the movies; censorship, it seems, only worked one way in Hollywood. The most intelligent review of *Tennessee Johnson* was written by Manny Farber in the *New Republic*, of all places. "The picture looks to have been pretty thoroughly censored, so as not to rake up any coals still burning," wrote Farber, who concluded, "censorship is a disgrace, whether done by the Hays office and pressure groups, or by liberals and the OWI."

The bluenoses and red-baiters of the Hays office, HUAC, and the Legion of Decency have gotten their historiographical due; when, if ever, will Lowell Mellett and the OWI get theirs?

Bill Kauffman is the author, most recently, of With Good Intentions? Reflections on the Myth of Progress in America *(Praeger).*

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FOREIGN POLICY

The Agony of Kosovo

by Alex N. Dragnich

The agony of Kosovo, Serbia's ill-omened province, is recorded in the pages of history. Over the centuries, Kosovo was transformed from an ethnically homogeneous center of the Serbian medieval empire to an embattled region populated predominantly by ethnic Albanians demanding independence. To appreciate the position of the Serbs, imagine Hispanics controlling large areas of Texas or California and demanding independence, while at the same time engaging in guerrilla actions against local police and state officials. To understand how the Kosovo situation evolved, we must turn to history.

Although the largest state in the Balkans for over 100 years, Serbia left a legacy which is known mainly to the historians. Art historians have written volumes about its Christian monuments, mainly the many churches and monasteries with their impressive frescos. Two of the monasteries (Sopocani and Studenica) have been declared "World Art Treasures."

Medieval Serbia was a part of the international community, actively involved in matters of political, military, and cultural importance. Serbian royal courts communicated on levels of respect and honor with Venetian Doges, Hungarian Kings, Bulgarian Tsars, and Byzantine Emperors. Unlike many of these, however, Serbian emperors did not build fortresses or ostentatious castles and palaces in which to enjoy the fruits of this world. But all of them felt duty-bound to build at least one church or monastery. Some built many. Pre-World War I archeological findings show that as of 1912, some 1300 monasteries, churches, and other Serbian monuments existed in Kosovo and Metohija (after a Greek word signifying monastery property). In the domestic political sphere, medieval Serbia's outstanding achievement is Tsar Dusan's Code of Laws, studiously prepared over

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a period of about six years (1349-1354). It is among the leading law systems of the world. Defeated by the Ottoman Turks in the famous Battle of Kosovo in 1389, Serbia soon thereafter fell under Turkish colonial rule, and remained so until its resurrection in the 19th century.

In Serbia's heyday, the Serbs and the few Albanians among them lived in harmony under similar conditions and patterns of life. In those days, the Albanians were mainly Christian. In the centuries after the defeat at Kosovo, and even while Albanians were converting to Islam, it was still not unusual for Albanians to visit Serbs on religious holidays and to bring a sick child to a Serbian church for prayers. As they became surrogates of the Turks and enjoyed increased advantages, however, they became more violent toward the Serbs. This was especially true in the 18th and 19th centuries. The 19th-century reports of French, Russian, Austrian, and Serbian consuls in the Kosovo area contain graphic accounts of atrocities committed by the Albanians.

The Serbs look upon the 415 years of foreign subjugation, from the Battle of Kosovo to the First Serbian Uprising in 1804, as a dark age. That period reveals a story of a people subdued by and subject to two mighty empires, the Ottoman and the Habsburg. It is a story of hardship and sacrifice, fortitude, and patience, in which a proud people endured foreign rule and ultimately re-emerged as a free nation.

Among the factors that shaped the Serbs' future were the Serbian Orthodox Church, mass emigrations (usually led by its patriarchs), the epic poetry that gave Serbs a sense of their history in an era in which literacy and written records were rare, the existence of an autonomous Serbian nation in Montenegro led by its warrior prince-bishop, and service in the military of several countries (Turkey, Austria, Russia) which was to prove invaluable when the time for armed uprising arrived. (It should be noted that Serbs fought for the United States in its first foreign war. In the Barbary wars of 1805, 12 Marines and a mixed company of Serbs and Greeks, commanded by Serbian Captain Luka Ulovic, took the Libyan fortress town of Derna.)

An analysis of early Turkish census records shows that the ethnic picture in Kosovo and Metohija did not change much in the 14th and 15th centuries. But toward the end of the 17th century and in the first half of the 18th, conditions for the Serbs became much worse, as more Albanian tribes were pushed by the Turks to move into Kosovo. In two migrations (1690-1691 and 1736-1739), over 200,000 Serbs, led by Patriarchs Arsenije III and Arsenije IV, settled in lands on the frontier (the famous Krajina) given them by the Austrians in return for their help against the Ottoman Turks. The situation became still worse after the Turks abolished the Serbian Patriarchate in 1766. In the following decades, the number of Albanians converting to Islam grew, and the Serb populations diminished further. In a pre-World War I publication, Serbian historian Jovan Cvijic estimated that between 1876 and 1912 about 150,000 Serbs were forced to leave Kosovo.

In the Balkan War of 1912, with most Albanians fighting on the side of the Turks, the Serbian army liberated Kosovo, but following the German onslaught in World War I, the Serbian forces and government in 1915 fled across the mountains of Albania to the Greek island of Corfu. From there they were to return to the homeland via the Salonika front as the final year of the war was coming to a close, which also saw the formation of the new Yugoslav state in December 1918.

In the years before World War II, Kosovo received benign neglect, although there was some agrarian reform, mainly in the transfer of Turkish land to Albanians and Serbs. The problems facing the new national government—Croatian resistance and the devastating economic conditions resulting from the war—commanded much higher priorities than backward Kosovo.

In the summer of 1939, I visited my Uncle Peter and his wife in Kosovo (actually Metohija), where along with other war veterans he had been given land, which had to be cleared before it was arable. He told me that he did not have any difficulties with the local Albanians, some of whom I saw moving along the roads, often riding or leading donkeys. I did not see any military or police presence, although I knew that in the first years of the new state force was employed to suppress outlaws who were challenging its authority.

Uncle Peter was highly regarded and for about ten years was the village elder of an area that was populated by an equal number of Albanians and Serbs. A few days after the capitulation of Yugoslavia in 1941, an Albanian neighbor brought him a gun and 50 rounds of ammunition and said, "Peter, bad times have come, and it is possible that some bad man might come and attempt to kill you, so I brought you a gun and cartridges. If someone should come, give us a sign and we will come to defend you." He decided not to wait around, and took 40 sheep, two horses, and wagon with half a ton of wheat to his old home in Montenegro.

When he arrived in his old village, he was made a member of the National Liberation Committee, the beginning of guerrilla action against the Axis. At that time there was not yet a Chetnik-Partisan split. At a meeting of the committee in April 1942, he posed a question about the disappearance of the former president of the regional village, who allegedly had been killed and his body thrown in a pit. The president of the committee answered that the rumor was not true, simply disinformation spread by "our enemies." Later it was determined that the allegations were indeed true.

On his way home, Peter was accompanied by a close relative (at that time a member of the Communist Party) of the slain man, who told Peter that he had disgraced himself with the question he posed, and had soiled the great reputation that he had enjoyed among them. In addition, he told Peter that if he had been the presiding officer, he would have killed him on the spot. Soon some of Peter's close relatives, themselves Partisans, warned him that he was in grave danger of being killed, and that they could not help because they were not always with him.

Consequently, he fled to the nearby city of Niksic, where the Chetniks were in control. He was never in Chetnik military units but was with them throughout the civil war, and even in their withdrawal as far as Slovenia, where the Partisans captured them. No charges were ever filed against him, and he was taken back to his village in Metohija, where he rejoined his wife (she had stayed behind and had not been disturbed). After his flight to Niksic, his wagon and horses had been confiscated by the communist Partisans in Montenegro.

While I worked for the American Embassy in Belgrade (1947-1950), Uncle Peter came to see me, and my wife and I visited him in 1949. On one occasion, he told me how the communist regime had confiscated all of their guns. I asked

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him if the Albanians had turned in their guns. He said, yes, they had each turned in a gun—out of the nine or ten that each one of them possessed.

With the beginning of the war, Italian forces came to Albania and subsequently to Kosovo to help establish a Greater Albania. Bulgarian forces claimed parts of Kosovo and Macedonia. The result: from 1941-1945, between 70,000 and 100,000 Serbs were forced to flee, and about 10,000 were killed. Serbian Orthodox churches were plundered or destroyed. Cemeteries were desecrated. Schools were burned. After Italy collapsed, Nazi troops took over in Kosovo, and the number of anti-Serb acts increased. After the war, Tito's communist dictatorship forbade the return of the Serbs who had fled or been expelled.

In his attempt to seize power, Tito and his communist comrades sought the help of the Kosovo Albanians, promising them self-determination. The latter, although providing almost no help, interpreted the promise to include the right to secede. Whatever he had promised, Tito would not grant secession, but sought to mollify the Kosovo Albanians by providing for autonomy within the republic of Serbia. What began as the "Autonomous Kosovo-Metohija Region" (1947) became the "Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija" (1963), only formally linked to Serbia (through amendments in 1968-1971 and the 1974 constitution). This was not a mere academic exercise in semantics, for under Yugoslav conditions it meant ascending from a faceless geographic entity to a "constituent element of the federation." In communist jargon, Kosovo and Metohija were referred to as Kosmet.

In all but name, the 1974 constitution made Kosovo a separate republic (a republic within a republic). This incongruous situation enabled the autonomous province to veto proposed legislation in the Serbian parliament that had nothing to do with Kosovo or Vojvodina, the other autonomous province where Serbs were in a majority. Moreover, the Serbs in Kosovo could not invoke the minority rights provisions of the constitution. Ethnic groups that had their own republic were by definition not minorities, and hence could not invoke those provisions even if they should find themselves minorities, as the Serbs did in Kosovo.

Even before the 1974 constitution, the Kosovo Albanians persecuted the Serbs. They desecrated their churches, stole or destroyed their property, employed duress to get them to sell their holdings, and engaged in other acts designed to force them to leave Kosovo. Even Serbian professionals with whom the Albanians were satisfied were told, as a condition of their continued employment, that they must learn Albanian. Many of those Serbs, nearing retirement, refused. Moreover, in ten years (1971-1981), the Kosovo Albanians brought in from Albania 240 university teachers, along with textbooks in Albanian. They imported movies, arranged for Albanian TV and radio hookups, as well as sports and cultural visits. In addition, there was in the years after World War II a large immigration from Albania, somewhere between 100,000 and 300,000. Most Serbs insist that Tito encouraged this, and even party comrades, while avoiding precise proof, maintain that he wanted to change the ethnic composition of Kosovo.

During the Second Yugoslavia, Kosovo was ruled by the Communist Party of Kosovo, part and parcel of the Yugoslav Communist Party. In its early years, Tito's regime had many difficulties with Albanian nationalists, one of whom came into the office of Miladin Popovic, the actual founder of the Albanian Communist Party, and shot him in cold blood. The Albanian nationalists were put down and communist rule solidified. Still, the Yugoslav party continued to have many troubles with the Albanians, this time with the party comrades.

Tito and his associates had proceeded on the assumption—erroneous as it turned out—that providing increased autonomy and greater economic assistance to the Kosovo Albanians would make them loyal citizens of Yugoslavia. With slightly more than 15 percent of the Yugoslav population, Kosovo was allocated up to 30 percent of the Federal Development Funds. But Kosovo was able to cover less than ten percent of the needs of the province. The remainder was provided from funds of the federation or the republic of Serbia.

Following Tito's death in 1980, the Kosovo Albanians in 1981 launched demonstrations in favor of a republic and outright annexation to Albania. These were put down with some bloodshed, followed by measures designed to curb similar actions in the future. In 1974, a Cominform (Communist Information Bureau) group had been discovered, and a "movement for the National liberation of Albania" had surfaced in 1976. At the same time, the Kosovo Albanians continued anti-Serb actions. Today those acts would be called "ethnic cleansing," and the Serbs painfully point out that in the past 20 years no Kosovo Albanian leader has admitted or apologized for the persecution.

During the 1980's, before Slobodan Milosevic became the principal actor, the Yugoslav Communist Party leadership spent much time on the Kosovo problem. For example, in May 1987, at an "ideological" plenum of the Central Committee, one member expressed his exasperation: "If we cannot quickly overcome genocide . . . then I see as the only way out an urgent convoking of an extraordinary Congress of the League of Yugoslav Communists and the calling of free elections with multiple candidates, so men can come to the top who can bring an end to genocide." The next month, the Central Committee and the Presidency of the Party took the position that "the most difficult part of the problem of Kosovo and the whole of Yugoslav society is to be found in that the policy of the [League] is not being implemented." Moreover, they said that "the pressure on the Serbs and Montenegrins must be stopped with all the means of our socialist self-management system."

Two years earlier, the Bar Association of Serbs, in letters to the Serbian and Yugoslav parliaments, demanded action against the "illegal and unconstitutional acts" of the Kosovo Albanians. Similar letters were sent to all other federal bodies. The letters spoke of failures to nullify real estate sales made under duress, the damaging of cultural and historical monuments and cemeteries, and policies that forced Serbs, Turks, Gypsies, and others to leave Kosovo. While parliaments admitted that the problems existed, no successful actions were taken to remedy them.

Among examples cited by the president of the Bar Association were the remarks of onetime minister of defense and close ally of Tito, General Nikola Ljubicic, to a joint meeting of the presidency of Serbia and the Party Central Committee of Serbia: "Some things that are happening are so drastic that I simply ask myself how we can tolerate that in a legal state." He proceeded to tell of an Albanian who moved into a Serbian house and moved the old lady out.

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When her son came to investigate, he found her sitting on a stump outside. He was forced to take legal action over two or three years, and he won. But when a militiaman came to carry out the order of the court, the Albanian said that he had a machine gun and warned, "Whoever approaches will be mowed down!" This prompted Ljubicic to ask: "What kind of state are we?"

The president of the Bar Association referred to Serbia's "crippled constitution" which does not permit Serbia to exercise its governmental authority on the territory of its provinces, and argued that federal bodies which have authority are quiet while "open enemies of Yugoslavia escalate their evil deeds."

The persecution was of such a nature that even Serbian communist officials left Kosovo. My two cousins, who were orphaned early in World War II, were reared in Kosovo by Uncle Peter and his wife, who had no children of their own. The youngsters were courted by party authorities, and when they reached age 18 were inducted as members. The older of the two, the young man, first became a teacher and later a local party secretary. When I was doing research in Belgrade during several summers in the 1970's, he came several times to see me. On one occasion, I asked him how he got along with the Albanians. His answer: "I get along well with them, but I always carry a revolver." In the early 1980's, he and his family moved to Belgrade.

Slobodan Milosevic, who became head of the Serbian communists in 1986, went to Kosovo to investigate in 1987, and there he uttered the famous phrase: "No one will beat you again." In the past, I have written that—despite that rhetoric—he let two years pass before taking action. My subsequent research reveals that steps were taken in 1988 toward amending the constitution of Serbia. It is not clear where the initiative originated, but it is obvious that adherence to constitutional procedures was scrupulously followed.

The first step was to amend the Yugoslav Constitution, thus permitting Serbia to change its constitution with respect to the status of the autonomous provinces within it. This was done in late 1988. Two key sentences serve to explain that need: "The Socialist Republic of Serbia . . . should be able to carry out indispensable functions on the whole of its territory." And: "The right of the Serbian people to form its state, as other peoples of the Socialist Federated Republic of Yugoslavia, was not accomplished because the constitutional principle that the provinces are integral parts of the Socialist Republic of Serbia was not consistently realized in practice." With this act, the republics recognized the validity of one concern of the maligned "Memorandum" of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts. Deceitfully, Slovenia and Croatia were later to blame the breakup of Yugoslavia on Serbia's actions concerning Kosovo.

To amend Serbia's constitution, the consent of the provinces was also necessary. Vojvodina gave its consent in February 1989 and Kosovo in March. The amendment takes away the right of provincial assemblies to veto acts of the Serbian parliament, because it says that the latter has the right to amend the constitution. But there are three conditions. The provinces may give their opinions; if they are rejected a six-month waiting period ensues; and if they are still rejected, the provincial assemblies may force a referendum.

The new Serbian constitution of 1990, did not, as widely alleged, revoke Kosovo's autonomy. It reduced it to the 1963 level, which was still considerable, but the Albanians rejected the decrease and engaged in civil disobedience. They refused to participate in all governmental institutions—schools, police, medical facilities—and set about creating their own informal ones. They even went on strikes in governmental enterprises, which resulted in firings. In the end, they proclaimed Kosovo an independent state. These acts prompted the Belgrade government to establish a military presence—which the Albanians dubbed "occupation"—in the province.

Milosevic repeatedly indicated that he was ready for a dialogue in order to find a solution. The only thing he was not willing to negotiate was secession, while the Albanians indicated that they wanted to negotiate nothing else. In the past two years, the more militant Albanians formed what they called the "Kosovo Liberation Army" (LAK), which by their own admission has resulted in the murder of over 50 Serbian officials as well as 20-odd "disobedient Albanians." (It should be noted that the Albanians celebrated the killing of each Serbian policeman.) In March 1998, Serbia retaliated. A few days before that happened, U.S. Balkan envoy Robert Gelbard described the LAK as a "terrorist organization." However, the United States took the lead in condemning the Serbian actions against the "LAK terrorists," demanding a military withdrawal.

It needs to be noted that the ethnic composition of Kosovo, while predominantly Albanian, is more complex than that usually mentioned in the media, i.e., 90 percent Albanian and 10 percent Serbian. Although the Albanians boycotted the 1991 census, it is estimated that there are between 1.6 million and 1.8 million of them, or a little less than 82 percent. As of early 1998, a large number of these were living abroad (200,000 in Germany; 260,000 in Italy; 130,000 in Switzerland; and 200,000 in the United States). There are about 200,000 Serbs living in Kosovo. But there are also other minorities: about 150,000 Gypsies, who are Muslims; 50,000 Turks, who are pro-Serb; 30,000 to 50,000 Slav Muslims, who are also pro-Serb.

What is the solution? When I posed that question in 1981 to Serbian dissident Milovan Djilas, he replied, "There is none." Nevertheless, in recent years several solutions have been suggested.

The first of the proposed solutions, supported by Serbia's leading novelist and onetime president of Yugoslavia, Dobrica Cosic, and some of his colleagues, would divide Kosovo so that the Albanians could form their own small state or join Albania. The Serbs would seek to save as many as possible of their Christian monuments. The main argument in favor of this plan is to prevent a far greater future problem: the growing number of Albanians (compounded by their high birthrate) who have moved into Serbia proper, well beyond the boundaries of Kosovo. Under the separation scheme, once the boundary line was drawn, Albanians on the Serb side would have to move out, and the Serbs on the Albanian side would move to Serbia. It is impossible to estimate the extent to which the Serbs of Serbia support this proposal. It is, however, rejected by the Milosevic government, as well as by the Serbian Resistance Movement in Kosovo, mainly on the ground that it would set a precedent for other parts of Yugoslavia to demand secession. In the past, some Kosovo Albanians have supported partition.

A second solution, proposed by some Kosovo Serbs, would involve the "regionalization" of Serbia, dividing it into some 10 or 12 regions in the hope of enhanc-

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ing local sovereignty and the economic well-being of each. Under that proposal, Kosovo would be one region and Metohija another, even though until 1945 Metohija was part of Montenegro, and 60 percent of its properties were owned by the Serbian Orthodox Church. This proposal seems to have little support.

A third proposal would divide Yugoslavia into three federal units—Serbia, Montenegro, and Kosovo. This proposal seems to have significant support among some Albanian leaders, because they see it as an important step toward independence. Serbia, however, is unlikely ever to accept such a status.

A fourth proposal, and the one that seems to have the most to recommend it, would provide broad autonomy for Kosovo, but would not create a "state within a state," as the 1974 constitution effectively did. Belgrade has more than once indicated that it was ready to agree to autonomy equivalent to that enjoyed by minorities in Corsica (France) and in Tyrol (Italy). But Albanians would have to forget about their dream of independence, which few seem willing to do.

In May 1998, there was an American-brokered meeting between Milosevic and the seemingly moderate Kosovo leader, Ibrahim Rugova, designed to launch a peace process. Meetings of the two negotiating teams have either not taken place or have accomplished nothing, mainly because the LAK has continued and even increased its guerrilla actions. The negotiations, if they take place, will be long and arduous. As of this summer, Rugova has had little success in calming the partisans of the Kosovo Liberation Army, who seem to have no interest in a peaceful solution.

America's Contact Group partners were somewhat upset when President Clinton's agent, Richard Holbrooke, tried to find someone who represents the LAK, even posing with one of the warriors who held gun in hand (without his consent, he told the Serbs), particularly when the United States had recently called the movement "terrorist." In any event, he failed to find a military or a political chief of the loosely organized rebels.

The Contact Group for a time flirted with the use of NATO air strikes against the Serbs, but the futility of such a move soon became apparent, particularly since there was division in NATO, in addition to Russia's opposition. There have been indications that the United States would favor independence for the Kosovo Albanians were it not for the fact that this could cause boundaries all over the Balkans to unravel. First, there is Macedonia, with an Albanian minority (between 20 and 30 percent) who have no autonomy and who would likely join an independent Kosovo, with both very likely becoming part of a Greater Albania. Consequently, the very existence of Macedonia would be in question. Secondly, if Kosovo were to leave Yugoslavia, no valid arguments could be raised against the dismantling of the Bosnian state, created by the Dayton Accords. The Bosnian Serb republic would join Yugoslavia and the Croatian part (Herceg Bosna) would become part of Greater Croatia. What then would become of the Muslim state around Sarajevo that the Clinton administration did so much to create?

One thing seems certain: unless the Yugoslav forces can put an early end to the LAK insurgency (to be followed by negotiations), all sorts of Balkan dominoes will fall, an outcome that few would want to contemplate. On the other hand, given the way that the West has mismanaged the whole Yugoslav question, no one should be surprised if that comes to pass.

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ECONOMICS

Wall Street Boom, Main Street Doom

by Bob Djurdjevic

America's economy is in great shape, government officials and the establishment media tell us. "Just look at the stock market," they say, pointing at the record-breaking Raging Bull of Wall Street which set a new 12-month high of 9,377 in July. To such "bulls," I say, "Bull!" Using today's stock market as a barometer of the economy is like citing the Las Vegas odds to gauge the health of college education.

Once upon a time, the stock market may have had some, however tenuous, connections with the fundamentals of the companies whose shares it traded. But that was back in "the good old days." Today's stock exchanges have become almost totally decoupled from the economic reality of the companies whose shares they trade. Instead, they are casinos at which the big business elite do what "Joe six-pack" does when and if he can afford a trip to Las Vegas. Both play the odds on whim and emotion: the former wearing pin-striped suits, the latter in jeans and T-shirts.

Modern Wall Street is a game of cash-flows, not GDPs (Gross Domestic Products). It is a market ruled by supply and demand. The more money available for Wall Street to invest, the higher the Dow Jones matadors' capes will fly. The boost which Wall Street received from the Asian crisis last fall is a case in point. The money pulled out of Asia by the global "Joe six-packs" washed up on America's shores.

But possibly the biggest sustained boost which the Bull of Wall Street received came from the pension funds. Stocks were once considered too risky for people to gamble their retirement incomes on. No longer. Throwing caution to the wind, large pension funds—from state employees to labor unions to Fortune 500 companies—entered the Wall Street casino, increasing its money supply and boosting stock prices.

Those who claim that stock market prices and national GDPs are somehow linked to each other are creating an illusion of prosperity. They are part of a ruse, a brainwashing effort to help the Wall Street Hoover suck the savings out of the Main Street suckers' mattresses, which in turn could lead to an even higher concentration of power in Wall Street's pockets; in other words, to increased PLUTOCRACY!

Let's consider some aspects of America's economic reality. America is rapidly becoming the World's Biggest Jail. Nearly 600,000 able-bodied Americans are languishing in the nation's prisons rather than producing in the country's factories or offices, according to a Justice Department study cited in the April 27 *Wall Street Journal*. That's up 43 percent from mid-1989, roughly the time the New World Order was born. So any time you look at the supposedly low U.S. unemployment statistics which the establishment media feed to us, remember

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to tack on another 600,000 people who may be willing, but are not able, to work. Then there are those Americans who are willing and able to work, and are not (yet) incarcerated, but who are still prevented from working.

"Ameritech set to ax 5,000 jobs," read an Associated Press headline on April 15. "Intel to slash workforce by four percent," screamed an 11-inch front-page story in the *Arizona Republic* the same day. But those numbers are just a pregame warm-up compared to the jobs which the Fortune 500 giants (such as AT&T, Kodak, Xerox, and others) are slashing these days. Just as IBM did a few years before, when it shrank its payroll from 406,000 employees in 1985 to 220,000 in 1994.

Of course, the Fortune 500 companies have been downsizing for the last two decades. In the 1980's alone, they dumped 3.6 million jobs like so much excess baggage, and they shed another million of them in the first half of the 1990's. The above headlines signal an acceleration of the trend in the second half of the decade. No wonder Fortune 500 employment peaked in 1979!

The Fortune 500 companies' global employment accounts for a mere 17 percent of American jobs. Yet the Fortune 500 global revenues represent nearly two-thirds of the U.S. GDP. Which means that the American industrial elites' financial power by far exceeds its presence on America's Main Streets. And since money means power in plutocratic systems, it can also mean power to dupe the American people. Enter the stock buybacks . . .

One way Wall Street creates an illusion of economic prosperity is through stock buybacks. A *Business Week* columnist alleged in an April 13 story that "the [stock] buyback boom is mostly a boon." And it is—for the top executives of the nation's largest companies and their Wall Street cronies. As for the rest of Americans, it's a scam, a con, a Ponzi scheme—take your pick.

Here's a simple question: How many Main Street jobs did corporate America create by spending $180 billion (a *Business Week* figure) in 1997 on stock buybacks? Answer: Zero! In other words, the equivalent of the combined GDPs of more than a dozen small European countries has been thrown into the Wall Street Hoover without creating a single product or job! And that's economic prosperity? Frankly, that sounds more like financial perversion.

Ah, but some "experts" quoted in *Business Week*'s story argued that stock buybacks were a way big companies, like IBM, return cash to "millions of shareholders" who "get money going . . . to thousands of Yahoos [the Internet service provider]." Not so, for three reasons. First, because any company management which admits to having excess cash (as IBM did in January, for example) which it wants to return to shareholders is by definition a company lacking the creativity and entrepreneurship needed to succeed in business. Its shareholders should dump such a Board right away before they give the entire store away, not just some "excess cash."

Second, there is no evidence to support the claim that IBM's stock buyback money ended up in Yahoo's IPO shareholders' pockets. And even if some did, why is the IBM Board using its shareholders' money to fund competitive startups? Why is it not investing the money to further IBM's interests? So even if true, would this not be a betrayal of the IBM directors' fiduciary duties?

Third, the statement is not supported by the facts. The stock buyback money isn't going to "millions of shareholders." Less than one-third of Americans play at the Wall Street casino despite its long "bull run" and decades of financial hype. Of those who are foolish enough to challenge the "house," only about three percent of them account for three-quarters of the individual portfolios' value.

It is also factually unsupportable because even those three percent of individual shareholders' portfolios fade in comparison to those owned by institutions. The major stock market players are the Wall Street cronies of the "blue chip" companies' CEOs. In IBM's case, institutional investors own more than half of its shares and a huge chunk of the stock's trading volume. So Wall Street institutions are much more likely to profit from stock buybacks than are the typical "buy and hold"-type Main Street investors.

The latter group are actually the patsies who pay for the privilege of watching the big money changing pockets. Kind of like a spectator's head at a tennis match, as Wall Street's "buy side" and "sell side" trade shots over the New York Stock Exchange's "Intranet," using the listed company's cash as the ball.

IBM's stock, for example, has more than doubled in price since September 1996, even though most of its business fundamentals are either down or declining. Like a hot air balloon, the Big Blue shares kept rising on Wall Street's hot air-fueled forecasts, and on IBM's $20 billion-and-counting share repurchase program. Just in case the magnitude of this Big Blue scam is lost on some readers, that's about four of Albania's GDPs. (In late April, IBM's Board approved an additional $3.5 billion for stock buybacks.)

All of which is creating a scene fit for the theater of the absurd. IBM reported in mid-April that its first quarter earnings in 1998 were down 13 percent (down 18 percent when adjusted for stock buybacks and lower tax rates); that its equity was down 13 percent since the end of 1996, while its debt surged by 55 percent; and that its cashflow was a negative $1.7 billion. Yet Wall Street responded to such bad news by bidding up the price of the Big Blue stock to an all-time high of $120 per share!

Even I, a 30-year veteran of the computer industry, was left speechless. But none of the establishment media expressed surprise, much less shock, at such an incongruity. In the perverted market that Wall Street has become, even soaring prices on plunging profits don't raise eyebrows anymore. But they do confirm our cashflow theory—that today's stock market is no longer related to the economic performance of the companies whose shares it trades.

So what's our government doing to protect the small investor from such Big Business scams? In a word—nothing. In fact, one can make a case that it is aiding and abetting the Wall Street and Big Business con artists. When Congress passed the law last year lowering the capital gains tax, it provided an incentive for stock buybacks. Companies like IBM can now argue that they are returning cash to shareholders in a way which is more beneficial to them than increasing the dividends, which are now taxed at a higher rate.

Of course, dividends would have benefited all shareholders, including the "buy and hold" Main Street-types, while the stock buybacks reward only those former owners who choose to sell their shares to the company. But fairness and egalitarianism have never been strong suits of Wall Street or Big Business.

Nor, as we now see, of our Congress, either. They collect Main Street votes and taxes, then vote Wall Street interests. It's another act in our theater of the ab-

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surd. Its title could be "Perversion of Democracy."

"Perversion of the Individual" could be the title of the next act. Fortune 500 executives often become corrupted with Wall Street's money and start to engage in self-dealing, to the tune of tens or hundreds of millions of dollars (each). Enter insider trading . . . the ultimate Wall Street/Big Business Nirvana.

It goes like this. A "blue chip" company buys back its stock while its top executives (who made the stock buyback decision) exercise their stock options (read "sell" as they order the company to "buy"). That's like buying from yourself—and at inflated prices and huge profits (since executive stock options come at deep discounts relative to market prices). Incest? Maybe on America's Main Street. But not on Wall Street.

No, I am not talking only about the IBM chairman's $91.5 million which he took home in 1997 as direct compensation, according to the April 5 *New York Times*. Nor about Walt Disney's Michael Eisner, who got about $576 million last year, according to the Washington-based *Multinational Monitor* ($226 million of it in stock options value, even though his company's return was 29 percent lower than that of its peer group—per the *New York Times*). I am also thinking of the "little guys," the mere corporate vice presidents, who profited to the tune of millions of dollars each from insider trading in 1997.

It didn't take long for the once pristine Big Blue insiders to take a clue from their new chairman's behavior that the time of greed had arrived in Armonk, as it had elsewhere in corporate America. In the last 18 months, the period of unprecedented IBM hype and nearly $11 billion in stock buybacks, the insiders sold some $78 million worth of Big Blue stock, mostly by exercising their stock options, for a $34 million pre-tax gain. So as IBM was buying big time, insiders were selling big time.

Meanwhile, not a single IBM executive bought shares of the company in the three quarters between July 1, 1997, and March 31, 1998. What about "putting your money where your mouth is"? AWOL in Armonk?

How is such self-dealing possible? Guess who appointed all three IBM directors of the Board's Executive Compensation Committee? The Board itself. So "Perversion of Corporate Governance" could be the title of the final act.

"In an almost inevitable irony," wrote John Gray in *False Dawn*, the "'Karl Marx' theory of historical inevitability has been taken up by a new breed of social engineers, ensconced in the International Monetary Fund, the U.S. State Department, Western European governments, and the editorial offices of most western newspapers." In other words, the New World Order's "free market globalism" is merely another mutation of Marxism. It's a "red" sheep in a "blue chip" wolf's clothing. Communism was a dictatorship of the proletariat. Globalism is a dictatorship of capital. But both are dictatorships! And both ideologies have been hatched and crafted in the same mints—the boardrooms of the world's top bankers and industrialists. Both depended on the corruption of Moral Man by material means as a means of enslaving and destroying him.

At the start of the century, it was Lenin and his Bolsheviks who tried to destroy an ancient Christian culture (Russian) and who snuffed out tens of millions of lives in the name of materialistic communism. Today, it is the multinational corporations that are the ruthless soldiers of the globalist Wall Street elite. For the time being anyway, they only fire their workers by the millions, instead of firing at them as the Marxists did.

But do you really believe that a leopard can change its spots? If not, is there any wonder that a Wall Street boom may also spell a Main Street doom?

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LIBERAL ARTS

THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS A BLACK HELICOPTER

"A special unit of U.S. Marines will arrive in Birmingham, Alabama, August 3rd to prepare for war. The 243 soldiers will have assault rifles in hand to execute secret missions and perform maneuvers in the city. The training is part of a certification program in urban combat called TRUE (Training in the Urban Environment). Sgt. Chris Cox . . . noted that while civilian control is an important element of urban combat, he did not know if the Marines would rub elbows with Birmingham civilians. 'We're going to put as small a footprint on the city as possible. There will be a lot of helicopter noise,' said Cox."

—*from the* Birmingham News *(July 26, 1998)*

FAMILY

Why Asian Population Growth Is Grinding Down

by Virginia Abernethy

Asia's currencies will not be the only things plummeting. Look next for a decline in fertility rates (the number of births per woman) in the countries affected by Asia's financial meltdown. Most people want children, but not more than can be raised well given family standards. Caution about childbearing is widespread when resources and opportunity contract or seem severely limited. A 40-percent decline in assets probably makes lots of people feel poor enough to postpone marriage or parenthood.

A fertility rate of 2.1 just replaces parents (with an allowance for child mortality), so this number leads, in the long run, to a stable population. Some Asian countries already have fertility rates below the replacement level. States such as Hong Kong (1.2 births per woman), Japan (1.5), South Korea (1.7), Singapore (1.8), China (1.8), and Taiwan (1.8) expect to see the end to population growth in 20 to 60 years, depending on when replacement-level fertility, or lower, took root. If fertility rates fall very low,

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population growth stops sooner.

East Germany's experience with reunification suggests that the fertility rate can fall below one child per woman. Live births declined 46 percent between 1989 and 1991, a drop which Nicholas Eberstadt attributes to "enormous dislocations in the economy." By 1994, the fertility rate was .77 births per woman, down 50.9 percent in five years due to the combined effects of a 60-percent decline in the number of marriages and delayed childbearing: first-time mothers averaged 22.9 years of age in 1989 compared to 26.2 years in 1993. These marital and fertility changes have been described as part of a "rational adaptation process."

The Thai fertility rate, 2.2 children per woman in 1996, hovers already on the brink of replacement and will probably fall more during the present financial convulsion. Two pressures have long pinched optimism (and family-size targets) in Thailand: population growth has shrunk per-capita land holdings, so the rural population foresees farms being divided into plots too small to support a large family; in cities, economic security is hindered by a large disparity between rich and poor and by the precariousness of middle-class status in an economy where the fast-growing labor force threatens to overwhelm the creation of net new good jobs.

The situation in Malaysia differs slightly because of diversity and affirmative action. Ethnic Malays are nearly 60 percent of the population and, since independence in 1957, have benefited from many educational and employment opportunities available only to them, while the Chinese and Indian minorities have been progressively discriminated against. The latter's economic woes are reflected in declining fertility rates, from seven births per woman before independence to 2.5 in 1987 for Chinese, and from about eight down to three births per woman for Indians. At the same time, the Malay rate declined little. The 1996 national statistic—dominated by the more numerous Malays—was 3.3 births per woman, a rate surely to decline because not even privileged Malays will be able to avoid economic meltdown.

India began 1996 with a rate of 3.4, but *larger* family size is reportedly in vogue. Both the loosening of bureaucratic barriers to entrepreneurial activity and high emigration would account for increased income and greater family security. Domestic prosperity is likely to be dashed, however, by regional financial events, and this should renew the decline in fertility.

The highest fertility rates in South, East, and Southeast Asia occur where significant proportions of the population have emigrated, and immigration to the United States offers continuing opportunity. Many immigrants remit funds to relatives back home, a source of income which is widely distributed among poor- and middle-class families—precisely where most decisions about family size are made. Filipino women average 4.1 births. Similarly, Laotians (6.1 births per woman), Cambodians (5.8), and Vietnamese (3.7) are partially insulated from regional economic cycles by immigration and their ongoing refugee entitlements in the United States. Therefore, no sharp fertility decline should be expected soon.

These predictions grow out of the *fertility opportunity* explanation of family size. Some observers still argue that fertility falls because infant mortality rates fall or because women are educated (the U.N.'s favorite). But the commonsensical idea that people have as many children as seem affordable, given their childrearing standards, is gaining adherents. This rationale explains rising as well as declining fertility. Moreover, it builds on the theory of natural selection, which links evolutionary success to having the maximum number of offspring who survive and reproduce in turn.

Although deriving from biology and anthropology, the fertility opportunity hypothesis has converged with economic theory. In fact, America's history of low fertility in times of meager economic opportunity (e.g., the Depression) and high fertility rates during times of economic expansion (e.g., the Baby Boom years) has convinced the Advisory Council on Social Security that a small birth cohort, whose members are likely to encounter ample job opportunities relative to their number, will command high wages and see rapid career advancement and, therefore, have big families, and it says so in its 1994 report. On the other hand, a large birth cohort tends to flood the labor market, causing wages and benefits to stagnate or fall and leading to a decline in desired family size.

Both labor market opportunities and asset values subject to financial gyrations change the gleam in a father's eye. Knowing recent economic events and the distribution of wealth in any society, it is possible to predict the likely trajectory of fertility rates. When the middle class—not just the wealthy few—feels secure and rich, fertility rates turn up. That could happen in America. In Asia, however, expect decline.

Virginia Abernethy, a professor of psychiatry and anthropology at the Vanderbilt University School of Medicine, is the author of Population Politics: The Choices That Shape Our Future.

JUDICIARY

Is There Hope for the Federal Courts?

by Stephen B. Presser

In a radio address last year, President Clinton railed against congressional Republicans who were stalling on his nominees to the federal bench and had even threatened some sitting judges with impeachment. Their actions, he claimed, had endangered our tradition of judicial independence, and were an attack on the rule of law itself. The truth, of course, is exactly the opposite. For many years, the federal judiciary has been operating in a manner that is a gross departure from the Framers' intentions. Is there, then, any hope of reclaiming the federal courts, of bringing them back to their original role in the Old Republic? Perhaps, and a tiny ray of hope shimmers in some recent decisions rendered from the federal benches.

What would a jurisprudence that tried to recapture the insights of the Framers actually look like? The first principle of early national jurisprudence was that law cannot be understood without some sense of its divine purpose. The Framers believed that no American legal order could subsist without morality and that morality depended upon religion. Most of the early state constitutions had religious requirements for the exercise of the franchise or for holding office, three of

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the early states had established churches, and even the federal Constitution—which sought scrupulously not to favor particular religious establishments or sectarian creeds—contained several references to our shared Christian heritage. The First Amendment, which guaranteed freedom of religion and forbade *Congress* from legislating "an establishment of religion," was not—as most now wrongly believe—an attempt to create a "Godless Constitution" or a secular society. In fact, the First Amendment was designed to *preserve* the prerogatives of the people of the states to decide for themselves how best to integrate religion and society.

Preserving these state prerogatives—the express subjects of the Ninth and Tenth amendments, and the implicit aim of most of the rest of the Bill of Rights—was a reflection of another basic principle of the Framers' design. This principle, inherent in the Constitution's scheme of dual state and federal sovereignty, might be described as the principle of *proliferating variety*. It assumes that there is no single solution for social problems for all places and all times, and is sensitive to the need for the people prudently to adjust to differing social and environmental circumstances. The Framers believed that true liberty could not be mandated by the central government but had to emerge from the very soil, as it were, of the individual states and localities.

Several things follow from this principle, including the realization that perfect equality among citizens is unattainable. There must always be some hierarchy (and some sort of natural aristocracy) in society. In addition, variety demands considerable liberty in order to flourish, and liberty is secured by personal property and by the rule of law. Finally, liberty, property, morals, and religion must be safeguarded by intermediate entities between the individual and the central government. These entities include states, towns, communities, churches, and—perhaps most important—the family.

It takes no more than a statement of these basic principles to realize just how far the federal courts have strayed from the Framers' understanding. Since the Supreme Court's decisions in the early 60's that mandatory prayer and Bible reading in the public schools were unconstitutional—decisions which perverted the original understanding of the First Amendment as securing state religious prerogatives—the federal courts have rabidly enforced a secular vision of society. Utterly unfamiliar with basic constitutional principles such as those found in the *Federalist*—in which Madison and Jay both recognize the importance of a shared Christian culture in ensuring the virtues necessary for self-government—federal judges and most national opinion-mongers have driven religion (which they see as divisive) from the public square. Religion is still tolerated, of course, but it is regarded by most members of the chattering classes as a character flaw best displayed in private. Forty years ago, it was not uncommon for public figures to refer to America as a "Christian nation," but any politician who today repeats this obvious truth is roundly excoriated for intolerance.

"Tolerance," our current public creed that anything goes, is another way of expressing the ascendance in our culture not of classical liberty—which was grounded in responsibility and duty—but of self-indulgence. Look at the so-called "mystery passage" from the plurality opinion in the 1992 *Planned Parenthood* v. *Casey* decision. The passage, invoked in support of the Supreme Court's indefensible ruling that the 14th Amendment guarantees abortion "rights," reads: "At the heart of liberty is the right to define one's own concept of existence, of meaning, of the universe, and of the mystery of human life." The best that can be said of the "mystery passage" is that it is fatuous; the worst is that it is subversive of societal order and of the Framers' conception of human life as a sacred gift from God. In 1787, common law regarded most abortions as murder, and the Framers would hardly have objected to any state's prohibition of abortion. At the time of the 14th Amendment, many states had such prohibitions, and no one suggested that the amendment outlawed such legislation. The notion that the 14th Amendment, in the service of "a right to define one's own concept of existence, of meaning, of the universe, and of the mystery of human life," mandates a woman's right to terminate the life of a child within her is a perversion of history and a repudiation of our constitutional heritage.

The actual decision in *Casey* reaffirmed *Roe* v. *Wade*'s mistaken conclusion that abortion was constitutionally protected. Moreover, it declared, *inter alia*, that the state of Pennsylvania was prevented from requiring married women to notify their spouses before having abortions. *Casey* illustrates the doubly twisted nature of current 14th Amendment jurisprudence. The Supreme Court decisions prohibiting the states from governmental encouragement of religion perversely read the 14th Amendment's clauses—"No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws"—to mean that the strictures which the Framers of the Bill of Rights placed on the federal government ought to be imposed on the states as well. The actual language of the 14th Amendment was crafted to ensure that newly freed slaves had the same opportunity to use the courts to protect their property and contract rights as did other citizens. The amendment was not designed to tear down the foundation of dual sovereignty on which the Constitution had been erected. It is the grossest judicial usurpation, therefore, to read the 14th Amendment as "incorporating" Bill of Rights prohibitions against the states.

Other travesties resulting from this misreading of the Equal Protection clause include the prohibition on state bicameralism when one house in the legislature is elected based on political units or geography; the prohibition on

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"Who did more for the world: 'selfish' financier Michael Milken, or 'selfless' nun Mother Teresa? 'Michael Milken—no question,' I answered firmly. 'We're all much, much better off as a result of what he did.' Yet Milken is denounced, and Mother Teresa praised, because people are taught to view suffering as a standard of moral value. 'But I say, "What's so good about suffering?" I look at the value that people create.'"

—from a fundraising letter by David Kelley, executive director of the Institute for Objectivist Studies

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state-imposed term limits for congressional representatives; the prohibition on state-sponsored male-only military academies; and the prohibition on states outlawing preferential treatment for homosexuals. The plethora of court-imposed restrictions on what states can do, coupled with the federal courts' increasingly permissive reading of the Commerce Clause to allow federal regulation of almost all state economic, educational, cultural, or political activity, led to such a weakening of state sovereignty that secession might well be perceived as the only reasonable solution for those who want to preserve the Constitution's original conception of popular self-government.

But reform may be possible. For many years, the federal courts have exacerbated racial tension by mandating remedies for school segregation and by dictating employment and educational practices that required counting by race. These decisions required state and local authorities to divide up the citizenry and dole out rewards based on the color of skin rather than on competence or character. But the mood has changed, and recent decisions by the Supreme Court have made it more difficult for the state and federal governments to dole out benefits according to race, and have even stated that such racial line-drawing threatens to balkanize American society and to stigmatize those favored by such programs. The language employed in the opinions—"strict scrutiny" or "compelling interest"—is maddeningly elusive. Still, the thrust has been clear, and the results have been dramatic. For instance, a federal court of appeals has forbidden Texas to use racial preferences in admissions to its law schools, and California's Proposition 209, which bars the use of such quotas in any state programs, has been permitted to go into effect.

In the 1996-97 term, the Supreme Court rejected arguments based in essence on the *Casey* mystery passage and upheld state laws banning assisted suicide on the grounds that the 14th Amendment included no "right to die." The Court made no move to overrule *Casey* and *Roe*, but it significantly undercut the constitutional theory of those cases, and made it clear that (for the moment, at least) it was out of the business of reading new rights into the 14th Amendment.

The federal courts' hostility to religion appears to be eroding as well. A few terms ago, the Supreme Court upheld the right of religious groups to function on state college campuses on the same terms as secular organizations, and last year the Court explicitly overruled a 1985 decision that barred New York from spending public funds to send teachers to teach remedial education to pupils at private religious schools. The 1985 opinion had declared that such an expenditure was too great an entanglement of the state with religion, but, mysteriously, the 1997 decision simply declared it was not.

The Supreme Court has also voided the so-called Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), a federal law that attempted to overrule a Supreme Court decision which had given states more freedom to reject claims of religious immunity when applying general statutes. The decision Congress sought to overrule, *Employment Division* v. *Smith* (1990), had permitted Colorado to apply sanctions against users of peyote even if they claimed such use was required by their Native American religion. The claimants in that case had maintained that the state had to prove that it was following a policy which could be achieved in virtually no other way, and thus a "compelling" rationale was required before the state could interfere with an individual's assertion that a religious preference trumped general legislation. The Court, in an important opinion by Justice Scalia—a judge, incidentally, who has been a strong critic of the anti-school prayer and anti-Bible reading decisions and who has often publicly proclaimed his deep religious feelings—upheld the state, and declared that all that was required to sustain the general legislation was that it be pursuant to a rational legislative policy not aimed at interfering with religion. The "rationality" test gave states much more freedom than the previously prevailing "compelling interest" test.

RFRA sought to require the Supreme Court to return to the "compelling interest" standard. To the surprise of most pundits, the Court threw out RFRA, claiming that it was for the Court, not Congress, to set the constitutional standards involved. Not surprisingly, Justice Scalia concurred in the result. While the decision may seem to disfavor religion, it actually strengthens state control over the area, and moves toward recognizing that religion is a matter for the state, not the federal, government. Significantly, Justice Stevens, a dependable member of the bloc that normally supports expansion of the incorporation doctrine and a broadened role for the federal government, declared that RFRA, because it was an attempt by the federal government to meddle in religious matters, violated the First Amendment's "establishment" clause.

This decision can thus be read as a reaffirmation of federalism and of dual sovereignty, and there are several other recent Supreme Court decisions which point in this direction. One of the most famous was the invalidation of the federal Gun-Free School Zones Act on the grounds that the interstate commerce justification for the act was specious, and that it interfered with educational matters that were the traditional prerogative of the states. This was the first decision in decades that circumscribed the federal government's Commerce Clause power, which New Deal decisions had expanded to illimitable proportions. A similar limitation occurred in the Brady Bill case, in which the Court declared that provisions of the bill drafting state officials to aid in its enforcement violated principles of dual sovereignty. Both of these were decisions by narrow majorities, and both featured dissents by Clinton appointees to the Court.

But the most significant recent decision may have been the Court's unanimous rejection of President Clinton's claim, in the tort action brought against him by Paula Jones, that, as a sitting President, he could not be required to be a defendant in a civil action. There were no prior precedents granting any President such immunity, but since two Justices were appointed by Clinton and his position had strong defenders in the academy, the unanimity was still a surprise. The Court's embrace of the principle that no person is above the law was both a stunning and reassuring assertion of the rule of law.

Outside the federal courts, there are also some signs that the constitutional doctrines of the Old Republic have not been completely eviscerated. In the law schools, for the first time in memory, a number of scholars, many of whom are quite openly persons of faith (even some at Harvard and Yale), have begun to reveal the weaknesses in the Court's religion decisions and to criticize the "incorporation doctrine." For the first time in 30 years, it may become respectable once again to argue the truth—that the

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incorporation decisions betrayed our essential belief in dual sovereignty and wrongly reduced state citizens' rights to self-government. Remarkably, some legal historians have even suggested a reexamination of the conditions under which the Reconstruction amendments were passed. These amendments—the 13th, 14th, and 15th, dealing with slavery, the franchise, and the exercise of contract and property rights by the new freedmen—were, as most Southerners (but only a few law professors) remember, the dubious products of coercion, since the Southern states, then under military occupation, were required to pass them as a condition of re-admission to the union. No one expects, and indeed, probably no one in the legal academy advocates, the invalidation of the Reconstruction amendments, but the mere fact that their legitimacy has begun to be discussed ought to cast doubt upon the broad and unwarranted construction of these amendments.

Several judges, lawyers, and legal scholars have also concluded that constitutional law ought to be about more than the self-indulgence mandated in *Casey*, and many state legislatures and Congress have taken tentative steps to curb the explosion in litigation based on the manufacture of new victims' rights. Hindering reform is the fact that the current President is sympathetic to the trial lawyers who reap most of the profit from this litigation. Still, it is significant that the only one of President Clinton's vetoes which has been overridden was of a bill restricting private securities fraud litigation, and imposing sanctions on abusive plaintiffs and their lawyers.

The notion that we have overemphasized rights and neglected responsibilities is also evident in the movement for a constitutional amendment to reverse the Supreme Court's 1989 five-to-four decision protecting flag-burning. This ruling, which was contrary to the opinions of Earl Warren and Hugo Black, two of the greatest champions of civil liberties in the history of the Court, is a sign of how far the individualistic ideology of self-indulgence has gone. Forty-nine state legislatures have petitioned Congress to pass the flag amendment, and it easily achieved the required two-thirds majority in the House of Representatives, but, at this writing, it is still two or three votes short in the Senate, where the individualistic ideology is stronger. The current text of the amendment ("Congress shall have the power to prohibit the physical desecration of the flag of the United States") is not—alas!—much of an exercise in dual sovereignty, and would have the effect of reinforcing a power of the central government, but the grassroots movement pushing for the amendment does so in the spirit of community, of piety, of shared responsibility, and of respect for the self-sacrifice that the flag represents.

Most of these encouraging Supreme Court decisions have been by a slim five-to-four majority (as have the most discouraging decisions), and the retirement of any one of the conservative majority of the Court (Rehnquist, O'Connor, Scalia, Kennedy, or Thomas) could lead to a sudden reversal of these benevolent developments. Any appointments by Democrats would likely bolster the rights-oriented, pro-affirmative action, and anti-federalistic views of the Clinton appointees, Breyer and Ginsburg. Moreover, if congressional Republicans give in to the President's badgering, he might well have a chance to pack the lower federal courts. Ironically, if the Court keeps its present composition, it is likely to defer more and more to the lower courts, and thus, if the President has his way, the promising flowering of the jurisprudence of the Old Republic may be nipped in the bud.

But even the present five-person majority of the Supreme Court cannot always be counted on to do the right thing. Justices O'Connor and Kennedy were, after all, members of the plurality which issued the "mystery passage" in *Casey*, and Justice O'Connor, a former state legislator, has often refused to articulate clear rules of law, instead engaging in line-drawing and balancing tests which are appropriate for the people's representatives but not for its judges. The "balancing test" regarding governmental entanglement with religion, to which Justice O'Connor was devoted, led her to dissent in the case overruling RFRA, and though she voted on the right side of the decision to allow New York to provide remedial education in a private-school setting, she has joined with four other members of the Court (one of them Justice Kennedy) to bar even nonsectarian prayers at middle-school commencements. Justice O'Connor generally can be counted on to take a position against race-based governmental actions, but even there she has left the door open to states to discriminate on the basis of race if they can articulate a "compelling reason."

There are still many good years left in Justice Scalia and Justice Thomas, and Thomas is emerging as a powerful advocate of original understanding and dual sovereignty. George Bush's boast when he nominated Thomas (that race played no part in his selection, and that he was the most qualified person for the job) seems to have proved true (at least with regard to the latter assertion). However, there have been rumors that Justice Rehnquist, who has served long and honorably, may be ready for retirement. And Justice O'Connor and Justice Kennedy, while having joined in some laudable decisions, have also demonstrated a reluctance (as they did in *Casey*) to overrule previous Court precedents even if the reasoning used to reach them is deeply suspect.

The fact that President Clinton was reelected even though Senator Dole had promised to appoint judges committed to interpreting rather than rewriting the Constitution suggests that most Americans are still indifferent to the law-making of our unelected Platonic Guardians. On the other hand, the fact that the American public returned majorities to Congress who are generally committed to reining in the judges suggests the contrary. Still, if even the extraordinarily popular flag amendment founders in the Senate, it is unlikely that constitutional amendments will reverse the nefarious Supreme Court precedents, especially those regarding abortion and state-sponsored religious exercise. Friends of the Old Republic should wait to see whether the Court continues along the path represented by recent decisions on race and federalism, and to see whether a conservative Republican is elected in 2000. If not, then the people of the states wanting to restore the Old Republic might be left with no other option but that taken by their forefathers after the election of 1860.

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By Bertrand de Jouvenel
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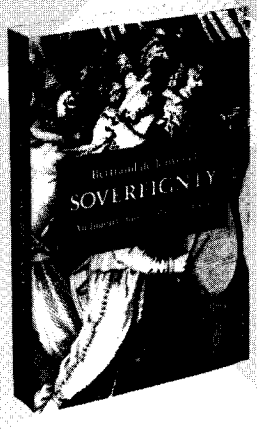

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Bertrand de Jouvenel (1903-1987) was born in Paris, taught widely, and became a renowned observer of British and American institutions.

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